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a baby, named Jarata, who became sick and died at the age of nine months (of gastro-enteritis). I was told the cause of death was the father's neglect to collect the stick. The baby Jarata who died was described as a spirit baby (*meni ahihi*); the real baby (*meni be*) had been left in the garden inside the stick and was taken away by the fairies (*sowai*). When the baby became sick, the medicine man went to collect the stick, no doubt with appropriate magic, but it was too late; the 'real baby' was no longer there.

This explanation, referring to the father's neglect, was given by members of Jarata's maternal clan. But I was given a second explanation by the child's paternal clan. According to them, the child died because the mother did not look after the land properly. The assumption here is that if the garden where the child obtains what we provisionally call his soul is well tended, then the child's body will also grow well, but if the garden is neglected (horticulturally or ritually), the child will become sick and die. This intimate connection between the garden and the well-being of the soul endures to some extent throughout life but is especially critical in infancy before a child is able to walk and grows teeth.

It is clear that the 'baby in the stick' resembles what is generally known as an 'external soul'. In its more usual form an 'external soul' resides in an object which is carefully preserved from danger, for any vicissitude that may threaten the object will also threaten the life of the person to whom the 'external soul' belongs. Normally such an object is carefully buried and kept out of harm's way. It appears that the Orokaiva do believe in external souls in this sense, and that they reside in particular specimens of a plant after which a person is named, but that is not relevant here. The concept of the baby in the stick differs in interesting ways from the usual kind of 'external soul'.

The first difference is one of terminology. When I asked whether the part of the baby that was in the stick was called its *ahihi* (spirit) this was denied explicitly. On the contrary, it was the *ahihi* of the child that the mother took with her to the village after the ritual and it was the *ahihi* that the mother was left with when the child sickened and died. The child I had been looking at for several months and that died of gastro-enteritis was nothing but an *ahihi* and it was for that reason that it wasted away and could not live. The part left in the stick and stolen by the fairies was actually the child's *hamo*, its body. Emphatically, therefore, the Orokaiva believe that *ahihi* can be corporeal and that *hamo* can be incorporeal.

Let us now consider more precisely the transaction between deceased and infant that may be called transmigration of souls, which is mediated through the land. Let us start with the death of a man of the Seho clan who was called Jarata (1). Jarata's spirit stayed on the land he had been cultivating at the time of death. Some six years later, Jarata's brother lent this land for a season to Gilford, the husband of a classificatory sister. Gilford's wife was pregnant at the time. When the infant was born, it was named by the man who had lent the land, and was given the name of the dead brother, Jarata. As far as I understand, the effect of this act of naming was to attach the *ahihi* of Jarata (1) to the infant, Jarata (2). (A male infant may obtain its name from either its mother's or its father's patrilineage.) But in addition to *ahihi*, the baby had to be given bodily strength and vigorous growth, in other words, it had to have *hamo*. This could be obtained only from the garden where Jarata (1) was still present. Jarata's *hamo*

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CHAPTER VI

TARO

1. *Introduction*

It has already been pointed out (Chapter II) that taro is the staple food of the Orokaiva and that most of the taro produced is consumed directly by the producing household (over 90 per cent in all villages surveyed). Nonetheless, taro is the most ubiquitous of all Orokaiva objects of exchange: most households give some of it away every day and it is part of the conventional set of gifts that change hands on virtually every ceremonial occasion.

It is the purpose of this chapter to show that taro has all the characteristics of an object of mediation in the sense in which the term was used in the discussion on land. In particular, man identifies himself with taro, there is a series of myths which validate this identification, and these myths indicate the special significance of taro gifts. A wide range of social relations are mediated through taro gifts. Their main purpose is usually the mediating of social relations rather than the setting up of a claim for a specific return gift. In this respect again taro and land gifts resemble one another.

In his discussion of 'Reciprocity and Food', Sahlins (1965: 170–4) takes very

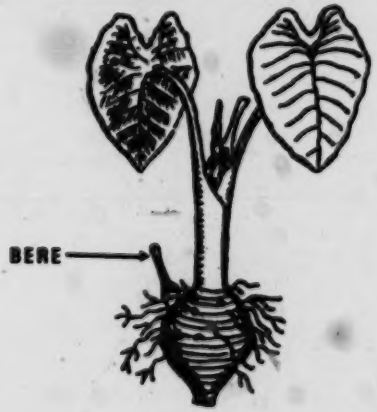

Fig. 7. *Colocasia esculenta* (taro).

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much the same view of gifts of staple foods as I shall present here. He writes:

> The character of the goods exchanged seems to have an independent effect on the character of exchange. Staple foodstuffs cannot always be handled just like anything else. Food is life-giving, urgent, ordinarily symbolic of hearth and home, if not of mother. (*ibid.* 170)

I am wholly in agreement with this, except that I do not see why we should confine this argument to staple foods. Many other gifts objects have a similar symbolic quality and are 'socially not quite like anything else'. The essential point, however, is that Sahlins clearly recognises that the symbolic quality with which an object is invested helps to determine how it is used as a gift:

> From this several characteristic qualities of food transfers appear to follow. Food dealings are a delicate barometer, a ritual statement as it were, of social relations, and food is thus employed instrumentally as a starting, a sustaining, or a destroying mechanism of sociability. (*ibid.*)

The present chapter elaborates these ideas, as applied to taro gifts among the Orokaiva. With the aid of some recorded myths, I shall try to show just how taro is conceptualised, in what precise sense it is symbolic of 'hearth and home', and specifically, in what sense it is symbolic of 'mother'. Secondly, I shall distinguish between two specific ritual statements that can be made with the aid of taro and show that these are indeed concerned with the starting and the sustaining of social relations. I shall show on the basis of mythological and ritual data that the two statements may be viewed as standing in a binary opposition: a masculine gift of raw taro inaugurates relations whereas a feminine gift of cooked taro maintains them.

Taro has a special position in the Orokaiva exchange system in that it symbolises commensality. Persons who exchange taro are either in fact or symbolically commensal. Thus taro exchanges are an almost infallible index of intimacy: once two persons have established a certain degree of intimacy, taro exchanges inevitably follow. The same cannot be said for any other object of mediation, not even pigmeat (which is exchanged only in certain specific circumstances) or coconut and areca (which are given, as a matter of custom, to even very casual acquaintances). I could put this more clearly perhaps by suggesting that the network of intimate associations maintained by any individual Orokaiva coincides with that individual's taro exchange network.

In the second part of the present chapter I shall refer to a somewhat detailed, statistically based, study of taro exchange networks. This study aims at answering the following questions: what role do taro exchanges play in the strengthening of existing intimate bonds based on exchange? What role do they play in widening the range of objects exchanged between partners, i.e. in making an already close social relationship even more intimate?

It is obvious that taro exchanges cannot make any essential change in the relationship of members of the same corporate group. By definition, this relationship is already determined by the rules of incorporation. Thus, two brothers do not become more intimate by exchanging taro. On the other hand, if the taro is a feminine object of mediation, it may strengthen the relationship between the wives of two brothers, i.e. between persons whose existing intimate

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bond is based on marriage exchange. Similarly, when married siblings of opposite sex reside in the same village, taro exchanged between their households would tend to strengthen the relationship between a sister and her brother's wife, and between her brother and her husband. Again among the Orokaiva where corporate groups are rather small, the kinship bonds between distant agnates would carry no implication of intimacy. Intimacy could in such cases be maintained only if the kinship bond were strengthened by fairly frequent exchange transactions for which taro would be a most appropriate object of mediation. In all these instances, taro exchanges mediate an extension of intimacy beyond the narrow confines of the corporate group.

So far we have restricted our discussion of exchange to the mediation of dyadic relations between partners. But if the Orokaiva exchange system is to solve the problem of the smallness of corporate groups, dyadic relations alone would clearly be of limited utility. As evidence presented in this chapter will show, the most intimate relationships are mediated by rather frequent gifts of taro, as well as a variety of other kinds of social interaction. There is a limit to the number of such relationships that any individual can maintain. The maintenance of such intimacy between a cluster of three households would require each household to carry on very frequent exchange with two others. While this is manageable, it could not be extended to the whole of a village such as Sivepe, with twenty-two exchanging households. Nobody can maintain twenty-one intimate associations all at the same time.

This kind of problem may be attacked by the setting up of a variety of corporate groupings on a basis other than kinship, and the study of such groupings is one of the main subjects of political anthropology. The Orokaiva, however, do not have corporate groupings of this type (no secret societies, no age sets, no economic institutions whereby 'big men' can achieve clear ascendancy over others). Instead, Orokaiva developed a principle of cohesion which I would call the circuit of mediation. The simplest way in which twenty-two households can be joined in intimate association by a circuit of mediation would be if there were intimacy between households 1 and 2, 2 and 3, 3 and 4, and so on, the chain being closed by an intimate association between households 22 and 1. Households 1 and 3 might not maintain an intimate association, but they would share intimacy with 2 and this would serve to mediate relationships between them. In theory such circuits could be unlimited in length, though the system would be rather cumbersome and expensive if extended too far.

I shall show in this chapter that the Sivepe taro exchange system presents a striking instance of such a circuit of mediation. The demonstration of this point unfortunately requires some painstaking and perhaps unduly tedious statistical analysis, which is to be presented as a separate paper elsewhere; only the basic argument is set out here.

The analysis of taro exchanges provides us with a model of the Orokaiva exchange system. We may not, of course, assume *a priori* that a model applicable to taro exchanges is applicable to anything else. That needs to be established empirically. If the culture is fairly homogeneous and the empirical data are reasonably full, the model ought to be confirmable in other areas such as marriage rules and the political system. If such confirmation is forthcoming, our

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gain will be not only ethnographic but also theoretical: we shall have learnt that the analysis of mediating elements in exchange may provide the key to social structure in an exchange-oriented culture.

2. *Taro Ancestors*

I shall begin the analysis of taro symbolism with one myth especially rich in content, which includes all of the five characters, some of whom, in one way or another, appear in all the myths. It also stands out by the clarity of its detail on the cultivation cycle. As I proceed, I shall discuss some variant myths which emphasise certain themes omitted in the main one or convey the same message in different codes.

The myth is part of the Totoima cycle. It has been reported, very incompletely, by Williams (1930: 155, 158–9, 276) who believed that 'the eating of Totoima's body is generally made to account for nothing more than differences of dialect'. On the other hand the informant who told me the myth in Sivepe volunteered the explanation that it was the story of the origin of taro cultivation. His version, the fullest of a number collected, did not mention the name Totoima, but it occurred in different versions of the same tale given to me by others in the Sasembata district.

1. A husband slept with his wife. She became pregnant and gave birth to a male child. The husband came and asked: 'Woman, where does the boy come from?' 'I have just given birth to him.' 'Then he is mine to eat. Strike and sever him; when he is dead cut him up and cook him for me to eat,' he said.

(*Commentary*: These words are clearer if we remember that the narrator is thinking simultaneously of a woman giving birth to a child and a woman harvesting a taro. The Orokaiva believe that a growing taro has spirit life and that this spirit life is lodged in the leafy top. Therefore a taro does not die when it is harvested but the spirit life stays in it as long as the leafy top is not severed from the tuber. The act of cutting the top from the taro thus always bears a symbolic similarity to the act of killing. We shall see later that there is a crucial difference between gifts of taro with and without the tops.)

2. The woman was very sad because she had to kill and cook her child. They slept together again and this time the woman gave birth to a female child which was treated in the same manner. Male twin children followed next. But when the man came to fetch these, he could not find them. The mother had taken them to a hiding-place where she covered them with a heap of weeds (*bivese*) by the root of a tree.

(*Commentary*: The word *bivese*, used in all versions of the tale, is a gardening term used to describe a heap of weeds left in a field after clearing. It was a woman's task to keep taro plants snugly protected after planting by using these weeds as a cover. The tale thus continues to unfold on two levels: the social and horticultural level. The twins are being treated in the manner of seed taro after planting.)

3. On some pretext, the mother returned to the field, nursed the children and covered them over again. When she came home, her husband said: 'Wife, what did you do with my child that was in your belly?' 'Husband I threw my

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child into the water because it was bad,' she replied. 'I am going to collect cabbage.'

(*Commentary*: The reference to the water is the first of a series of apparent lies which always hide a symbolic truth. In this case it is easy to see the meaning, as several myths exist linking the origin of the taro with water. In one myth a woman was prodding the ground with a digging stick. She found water there (and this was the origin of water); later taro grew in that spot. In another myth a boy and girl who were siblings were washed away in a flood on a coconut tree. At the place where they finally landed they discovered taro. Taro, being identified with a human child, is thought of a growing in the water of the womb. The growth of the taro plant requires a very great deal of water and heavy rain so that the growing plant actually lives in a watery environment, which thus resembles a womb. In this sense, her statement is true.)

4. 'I am going to collect cabbage.' Having said this she climbed a cabbage tree. As she looked down and saw the place where she had put her children, she began to weep. When she returned to the ground, her husband said: 'Wife why did I see you cry when you climbed to collect cabbage?' 'When I went to collect the cabbage the sap squirted into my eyes and I rubbed them,' she said. 'You are lying,' he said.

5. When the children were fully grown, she took them to the mountain far away. She told them their history; 'therefore, I must leave you behind and you must stay,' she said. When she joined her husband again, he asked: 'Why did you stay away so late?' 'As soon as I had done my work and planted my seed (*bere kowtie*), I started on my way home,' she said. 'Woman, you are telling lies,' he replied. When the man understood what his wife had been saying, he went away.

(*Commentary*: When a taro is fully grown it begins to grow shoots on the side of the main rhizome. It is then the duty of the woman to take cuttings from the plant. Strictly speaking these cuttings (Orokaiva: *bere*) are tops of corm-bearing bases of petioles (*Vide* Barrau 1965). These cuttings[1] are taken to a new garden being established, usually, at some distance from the old one. When the husband heard his wife saying this, he understood at once that she had been hiding the offspring she said she had thrown into the 'water'. He could not know, however, that his wife had had twins and this became his undoing.)

6. The two children, all by themselves, made a garden, ate their food and kept alive. The man went to where the two children were staying. The female sibling (*du ate*) had gone to collect taro while the male sibling (*du bite*) was lying asleep with his chest turned upwards in the shelter (*gugu*). It was there that the man found him, understood at once he was his child and cut out his heart and intestines. He ate these, leaving the rest of the body behind for the next day.

(*Commentary*: I do not know whether the narrator of the myth made a mistake when he said at the beginning that the hidden children were 'male twins'. There is no doubt whatever that at the stage the story has now reached they are siblings of opposite sex. While we cannot rule out the possibility of a narrator's mistake, my informant was an unusually reliable one and it is quite possible that there was an actual change of sex. This will become clearer later when we analyse the significance of male and female roles in this tale. The horticultural reference in this passage is to ordinary harvesting routine. The woman digs the taro and places them in a *gugu* or shelter where they stay until

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she takes them home. The brother is clearly identified with taro growing in the field.)

7. The story tells in more detail than is relevant here how the sister learned what had happened, how a magician from Managalasi brought the brother back to life by giving him the heart and intestines of a wallaby, how this man married the sister and how the young man killed his father when the latter returned to complete his meal. He cut his father into many pieces which were shared out among men whose descendants became the various population groups in the Northern District, as discussed in Chapter III.

The myth takes us through two complete cultivation cycles from the planting of the *bere*, the covering over with weeds to protect them from the sun, the gradual growth of the plants under the care of the woman, to the shifting of a new *bere* to a new garden, and finally the growing of these new *bere* to maturity. I was given no explanation as to why the myth contains two cultivation cycles rather than one, but it becomes clearer if we regard the myth, on the horticultural level, as symbolising the domestication of what was at one time a wild plant. At this level, the myth starts with the finding of wild taro and the transplanting of the *bere* of that taro to a garden clearing. When these *bere* grow to maturity, new *bere* are taken from them and these in turn are transplanted. The products of this second planting are regarded as properly domesticated taro.

One may well wonder why the second cultivation cycle was introduced into the myth at all. Direct inquiry did not produce wholly satisfactory answers. [262] People no longer eat taro that grows in the bush, I was told, because it does not taste sweet, it is small, it hurts the mouth. Nobody transplants wild taro *bere* to cultivated gardens nowadays; this was done only in the times of the ancestors. Informants' attitudes to this question were often of this kind when we were [775] discussing the jungle. It was above all a place where the ghosts (*sovai*) lived and therefore dangerous. Wild pigs, especially, often harbour ghosts. If plants or animals are domesticated, it is the dispelling of ghostly essences that is the objective of the practices followed. I shall show this in more detail when discussing the domestication of pigs. Taking into account this fear and suspicion of the bush, it is understandable that a seed taken from the bush is not regarded as domesticated just because it has grown to maturity in a garden. A plant grown from a bush seed is regarded as still being contaminated by *sovai* influence. It is only the second harvest that can be regarded as wholly belonging to the domesticated domain.

[775] We have already met the same idea when discussing the taboo on taro-growing on a dead man's land. This taro is effectively contaminated in the same way as [784] bush taro. It is not eaten by those whom it endangers. The next crop planted is still dangerous, and it is only the second planting after the previous owner's death that is free from taboo.

This discussion has already developed one of the main themes of the myth, namely the opposition between bush and garden, the wild and the sown, the dwelling place of spirits and the cultivated domain from which they are carefully banished. If we now turn to the message transmitted by the myth at the social level, we find a similar opposition, namely that between Totoima and his wife. Totoima who kills his own children, using his tusks as he does so, has partly a pig

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nature, partly a human nature, and these aspects are only partly differentiated. He ravages taro lying in the *gugu* in the manner of a wild pig. The wild taro *bere* planted by the woman in the beginning of the myth are fitly equated with his 'children' because Totoima's realm is the bush; bush taro are the children he might be expected to engender. The garden, however, is his wife's realm. It is she who nurses taro to maturity and who nurtures her family. She too has a dual nature, as she nurtures Totoima and also conspires to kill him. This second aspect is found in numerous myths concerning Totoima's wife. In the present version not only the wife but also the daughter is involved in conspiracy.

The taro are her children, and it is right that Totoima should eat them. She feeds them to him. However, she places restrictions on Totoima's appetite. The *bere* of the domestic taro must be preserved for planting. Hence it is the woman's duty to withhold these from her husband. Woman's two aspects – nurture and domestication – are crucial in the ritual statements made through gifts of taro.

Here we encounter again the dichotomy in sex roles to which I referred in the previous chapter. The male tends to be concerned with the killing of enemies and wild animals, the driving out of ghosts, the felling of bush before a garden can be made. On the other hand, the female is identified with the cultivation of taro. The *dema* of the taro are regularly called upon in drum songs performed at harvest time:

Bako jape teljo jape bako
Punduga kovari terijo jape bako, etc.

'Taro-being, ancestress, come to our aid, ancestress, taro-being; with the *punduga* harvesting help us, ancestress, taro-being', etc., where *punduga* is a variety of taro and the song continues with lines similar to the second one, invoking a great number of taro varieties, one after the other.

Taro, clearly, is a feminine plant. The first taro plant is found by a married woman in several myths I have recorded, though in others it was found by a brother and sister travelling together. One may well ask why it is, if taro is a feminine plant, that in this myth (and in others) we find its origin associated with two siblings of opposite sex (*du*), and why in particular it was the male sibling who was lying in the *gugu* while the female one was in the field. Those who like to impute laziness to the Orokaiva male may say that this scene is only too typical, but one cannot seriously believe this myth to indulge in caricature. In my explanation I shall anticipate an argument developed at greater length in Chapter VIII. It is a male sex role to clear a garden and give it to a woman; it is a female sex role to grow taro and give it to a man. These gifts are complementary and mediate the relationship between man and woman. The Orokaiva will classify a garden as a feminine thing 'because it is given to the woman' and a harvested taro as a masculine thing 'because it is given to the man'. This is why the taro lying in the *gugu* was a male sibling.

Evidence presented in the course of this chapter will show that Orokaiva regard taro as having a dual nature: while in the earth, they are identified with the woman who nurtures them and who regards them and nurses them as her children. When harvested they are victims to be killed, cut up and cooked and finally eaten. In this role of victims they are male, because the male is the killer

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824 and the male is also the most illustrious victim of the killer – the victim whose name and spirit is adopted by the killer. This theme, widely reported among headhunters, is strongly emphasised in Orokaiva culture, as Williams recognised. [773] In the myth discussed here, and in several others, these complementary male and female aspects of the taro are indicated by the presence of a pair of *dema*, probably always siblings of opposite sex, and clearly marked as such in the present myth.

261 In addition to father, mother and twins, the myth contains a fifth character,
773 the man from Managalasi, whose peculiarly male role is the hunting of animals. The marriage between him and Totoima's daughter lays down the Orokaiva principle that taro is a female product given to a man whereas meat is a male product given to a woman. In a number of myths I collected on the origin of marriage, that institution is set up by the male hero's action of bringing home meat to a woman instead of eating it in the bush, as was customary before marriage existed.

824 If female nature, in its pure state, is found in the taro garden and male nature,
773 in its pure state, in the jungle, then it follows that human beings, being born of a man and a woman, have a mixed nature. In Totoima this dual nature is
539 imperfectly developed (for he eats taro in the manner of a wild pig); similarly it is, at first, imperfectly developed in his son who does not hunt and has a purely taro nature. It is only when the man from Managalase has replaced the son's taro entrails with animal entrails that the latter has the power to defeat his father. He is then superior to his father because he has a fully human nature which is symbolised for instance by his manner of killing, with a club rather than the teeth (tusks), as did Totoima.

824 The analysis of this myth has enabled us to understand more precisely the
431 sense in which it may be said that taro is, as Sahlins put it, symbolic of 'mother'.
562 The Orokaiva do speak of taro as 'our mother' and the ideas they have in mind when they do so have been explained above. Taro is two things: it is a gift from a woman to her husband, and it is the offspring of the woman's womb inasmuch as she is identified with the taro goddess. The woman gives most of the taro-children she collects in the garden to her husband and others of her household, but she may extend this munificence by giving taro to others, i.e. by acting towards others as a quasi-wife or as though they were part of her household. Gifts of taro always have this intimate and deeply personal character as though the receiver was made part of the donor's household. The woman bears herself proudly, being pleased at having grown and cooked the food well; her attitude is formal and ceremonious, thus emphasising the importance of the gift and her respect for the recipient; at the same time she shows a certain solicitude, as though the recipient must be very hungry and very much in need of this meal.

3. *Taro as Mediator of Social Relations*

824 Gifts of taro may mediate either the establishment or perpetuation of a social
431 relationship. But the ritual context of the gifts differs considerably. By far the most frequent type are gifts which maintain relationships; these are made by
621 every Sivepe household every day. In the twenty-eight days for which I took

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records of taro gifts made in Sivepe village, the number of gifts made and received averaged 2.5 daily, ranging from a minimum of 1.3 averaged by the household least involved in the exchange system, to a maximum of 4.1 averaged by the household that made and received the most frequent gifts during the period. Allowing for variations in size, age and personality characteristics in the various households, these figures present a fairly homogeneous picture of customary exchanges.

Most of the gifts were made within the village, though a small proportion went to relatives and good friends who visited the village or who were visited by members of the Sivepe community. The usual practice was for the woman to bring home with her from the garden not only the taro her household was to eat that night and the next morning, but also taro to be used for giving away. When the recipient was of the same village, the taro would be cooked and presented ready to eat. The presentation was hardly ever made by the husband and most frequently by the children who were sent over with the cooked food and gave it to the named recipient without any ceremony. When there was any ceremony about the gift at all, the housewife was the proper person to make the presentation.

If I inquired who was the donor of the food I was often given the name of the woman, but sometimes the name of her husband, especially if the recipient was one of the husband's close kinsmen. There was always the notion that the gift served to maintain a specific relationship which would be involving either the husband or the wife. Strictly speaking, by far the greater proportion of the gifts were thus made to consanguines rather than affines. But it is better to regard the household as an integrated unit in its relations with other households, as the spouses undoubtedly mostly discuss together to whom food should be given. Essentially, taro gifts mediate relationships between households rather than individuals.

The size of the gifts was constant and seemed to be approximately what one person would eat for a meal. If a household made a gift of several meals to another household, this would be described to me as several gifts, with specification of the names of individual recipients. Here again, there was a contrast between the strict form of the gift and its overall significance. Strictly it was food given by one person in household A to one person in household B. When the family sat down to eat, the person who received the gift taro would share it out to others in the household. Therefore one may say that the gift was, in its general effect, from one household to another, but in strict form, it was emphasised that the social relationship between households A and B was mediated by one person in each household whose relationship was especially close. Thus, I might be told that 'X' sent taro to his brother 'Y'. In fact, X's wife would give the taro to one of her children who would take it probably to Y's wife. Y's wife would give it to Y, saying it came from X. Y would then give everyone a piece of it. A single gift would thus mediate quite a number of bonds.

As the gifts were very frequent, it seems a hopeless enterprise to specify on what occasions they were made; at first I thought taro gifts were made without any reason. Nonetheless, it is useful to discuss briefly a series of instances when taro gifts are considered appropriate. Let us first list a few of the more formal occasions when the housewife herself would make the presentation:

431 824 1. The recipient's household was receiving a guest from a different village, or a family member returning after a period of absence. In such a case, the guest would invariably be specified as the recipient of the gift. Informants would also say that they were 'helping' the host household.

[946] 2. A woman in the recipient's household had just had a baby. In such a case the woman herself was forbidden to go to her garden (*post partum* taboo) so she had to be helped by others who would bring her food.

[464] 3. After any death in a household, food would be brought by women from a number of households, again because death places a taboo upon the garden of the bereaved family.

There were also certain stereotyped situations where people felt they must make gifts of taro, but where no special ceremony was necessary. Here the food was often sent through the donor's children:

[476] [621] 4. The recipient had performed some service for the donor's household during the day. The gift in such cases was not really a payment for services rendered, though sometimes it was explained to me that so-and-so was sent some food because he had been unable to do his garden that day: he had spent the day helping the donor. Such an explanation was always unsatisfactory because the man's wife had usually gone to the garden. Also, it would be very wrong to suppose that there was something like a free labour market and that a day's work could be purchased for a meal. It is better to assume that the two households were on an intimate footing, were in the habit of sending each other food occasionally, and that such gifts never signified more than a confirmation of the warm feelings existing between them. When a man had just been helping the donor household, such an affirmation of warm feelings would be especially appropriate.

[736] 5. The recipient was too old to grow for himself all the food he needed. In such a case he or she rarely moved into the household of a younger couple. There are actually a number of strict rules which make such an arrangement most uncomfortable for Orokaiva. For instance, spouses are not allowed to quarrel in the presence of a parent or an affine. Until an elderly person becomes very sick, he or she lives in a separate house, but cooked food is sent to that house regularly by one or more women who look after the old person.

6. Food was also sent, as a matter of common obligation, to the house of a person who was sick or disabled.

[621] These cases by no means exhaust the occasions when taro gifts were made. There were, in addition, certain households with which relations were so close that food was sent over several times a week, even in the absence of any particular reason. One might say that such households lived in a state of semi-commensality. Though they each ate in or in front of their own houses, they tended to spend the evenings together sitting and chatting around the same fire. In the mornings they would sit together before going to their gardens.

824 431 621 437 The proper form in which to present taro in all the cases discussed so far was without the taro tops, cut up, cooked and ready for eating. These gifts signified no more than a simple extension of commensality from the mostly nuclear

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household to other households with which the bonds were intimate. Their function was to maintain existing social relationships. Nobody maintained relations of this sort with every household in the village; in the twenty-eight days for which I kept tally, the number of partnerships of individual households varied from three to fourteen out of a total of twenty-two households surveyed. This means that the households with the smallest networks had only three exchange partners during the survey period, out of a possible total of twenty-one, and the households with the largest network still failed to exchange with seven of the available households. The average number of exchange partners for the sample was 8.5. If the survey period had been longer, no doubt this average would have been higher, but even when critical events occurred (there was one death and one important visitor in the survey period) food contributions were not sent by *all* households, nor even by all households belonging to the same clan. Each household had its own private network, partly determined by close consanguineal and affinal ties but partly also by idiosyncratic considerations.

Taro gifts made to establish new relationships were of a different kind. In speaking of a 'new' relationship, I do not mean only those cases where gifts were made to persons hitherto unknown. Such cases were rare indeed. It may be justified, however, to speak of 'new' relationships when the nature of a relationship was changed dramatically, made significantly more intimate, as the result of a ceremony where gifts were made. Such a change would occur when one village invited another to a feast, thus terminating old hostilities and placing the relationship on a new footing. Similarly, a dramatic change in relationship would occur as the result of a wedding ceremony when two kinship groups, whatever their previous relation, would begin to regard each other as affines. On a smaller scale, some relationships are intimate only at the time of actual contact. An example would be guest friendships and trading partnerships. Here the intimacy has to be re-established on every one of the infrequent occasions when one partner visits the other. Even if there has been no conflict whatever, Orokaiva always ritually assume that a long-absent friend has become a stranger and the relationship must be restored. As far as I know, Orokaiva do not carry this notion as far as the Maori, who greet a long-absent friend as though they were still heavily in mourning for his death.

Taro is always given by the hosts when such a 'new' relationship is established. But in such cases the taro is uncooked, and still has the top attached to it. I was told that taro, in that form, still contained a spirit and was 'alive'. The ceremonial way of giving such taro is in the form of a pyramid-like mound, the tubers facing outwards, the tops facing inwards. On the top of the mound, a few taro are placed with the tops facing upwards. The mounds should be built on a *gaga*. It will be noticed that the position of the taro on the *gaga* is precisely the same as the position in which Totoima's son lay ('with his chest turned upwards') when his father attacked him.

If we compare this type of gift with the type considered previously, we notice several reversals of the symbolism:

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Taro given for	*Maintaining relationships*	*Starting relationships*
Parts of plant given	tuber only	entire plant
State of preparation	cooked	raw
Donor's sex	female	male
Ancestral twin with which gift is identified	female sibling	male sibling

The giver of a feast is always a male. Taro is hardly ever the only gift made on a ceremonial occasion, as pigs, *hambo* etc. must also be presented. Nonetheless, taro is essential as a mediating element in the starting of a 'new' relationship.

What is the significance of taro gifts in this context? Sahlins' suggestion that staple food when used as a gift object is symbolic of hearth, home and mother seem less cogent here than in the case of gifts of cooked food discussed earlier. In previous chapters I have presented a method for interpreting actions aimed at the establishment of social relations. I suggested that some objects are believed to have a special potency in attracting partners and that this potency is believed to be due to the presence of the donor's spirit in the gift object and the transfer of that spirit to the recipient through the mediation of the object. The questions are these: why, and in what circumstances, can a *male* use taro for the mediation of social exchange? What is the mythical and philosophic charter for such mediation? What is the distinctive power of feast taro to compel the recipient to respond to the donor's wishes?

The spirit substance transferred by the *male* when he gives taro at a feast is derived from his ancestors who are present in the land and in the tops of the taro. Just which ancestors are thought to be present it is hard to say, but they include the dead of the lineage who have used the land and they also undoubtedly include the spirit of the original *dema*, Totoima. It is believed that only certain varieties of taro are capable of successfully transmitting spirit in this way. These are known as feasting taro (*pondo ba*). I obtained a list of them, but this list was not very instructive. It contained virtually all the taro varieties growing in the informant's garden, though I was able to identify a few grown varieties which were specifically stated to be unsuitable for feast taro. Only a small minority of plants growing in the gardens belong to these varieties.

Males can use taro for the mediation of social exchange only if they are feasting varieties and if they are displayed, complete with tops, in such a way that they may symbolically represent Totoima's son: lying on a *gaga* with their chests turned upwards. What message does this symbolism convey? Totoima's son appears in the myth in two apparently contradictory roles: that of victim (eaten by his father) and of victor (killer of his father). So much is indisputable fact. It is easy to see what the gift of a feasting taro might mean if we take this symbolism to its logical conclusion. The message would be: 'You may eat me now; I shall kill you later.' No informant actually explained this meaning to me and this interpretation is therefore no more than conjecture. It accurately represents, however, the actual traditional relationship between feasting partners. A man who gives a feast deprives and humbles himself; every one of his gifts is symbolically a sacrifice of himself. His feasting partner is, in a symbolic sense, his enemy with whom he is now becoming reconciled. In order to effect

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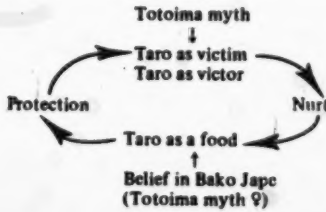
this reconciliation, he sacrifices himself symbolically in the form of his feast taro. But as the myth states, this sacrifice is not a final death. After the feast is over, the feast-giver is more spiritually potent than ever, having obtained the assistance of his own ancestral spirits. He is thus able to overcome his enemies.

Although these ideas are all in some way implicit in gifts of feasting taro, their threatening aspects are kept very much in the background, as the ostensible purpose of the occasion is to establish amity. If the gift represents a display, in very pacific form, of the donor's power, it also offers an opportunity for communion as the recipient consumes food imbued with the spirit of the donor and the donor's spirit thus becomes, as it were, part of him.

At this point we may summarise in a more formal manner the results of our analysis. The insight we have obtained into the meaning of taro gifts suggests that part of the Totoima myth may be represented by the following exchange cycle:

MODEL 18



This diagram does not represent the transaction between Totoima and his son (which has already been analysed in model 5), but rather the transaction between the taro woman (Totoima's daughter) and the man from Managalase. Here the man acted as protector while the woman provided nurture. The man from Managalase is primarily a hunter. He arrives on the scene with a wallaby slung over his arm. When he finds Totoima's son with his innards missing, he replaces these with the innards of the wallaby, thus enabling the son to kill his father. Clearly the meaning is that man, while having nothing but taro inside him, becomes necessarily the victim of the wild pig (Totoima), but when he has meat inside him he becomes strong and able to kill the wild pig. Thus man, by his concern with hunting and the provision of meat, becomes a protector to his wife.

The Managalase is a neighbouring district where the main crop is yam, not taro, though a variety of inferior taro (*pijama*) is grown in small bush clearings. The Managalase magician is therefore in an intermediate position between Totoima and his son. Unlike Totoima he recognises the technology and domestication of taro, but inadequately as he is mainly a hunter. Such, at least, is the Orokaiva view of Managalase.

Taro, for the Orokaiva, is symbolic of strength; it is preferred to other staples because it is believed to build stronger men. The success of an Orokaiva feast is measured principally by the amount of taro that changes hands. It is significant that in the fighting between Orokaiva and Managalase, the former were most often the agressors and the latter the victims of cannibal raids, inroads on

A [See Category 773, p. 64--Analyst]

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824 262 827 [721] hunting territories and the like. Thus the Orokaiva regard themselves as stronger than Managalase (certainly they are more numerous as their fertile land can support a far denser population), which served to show the superiority of taro over yam.

The taro myth discussed above may therefore be recognised as a charter for two contrasting types of taro gift made by Orokaiva. Woman provides cooked taro domestically but man, in providing the raw feasting taro, employs taro as a symbol of fighting strength. Heaped up in the manner of sacrificial victims, they are given to guests, not so much to express commensality as to display and offer for consumption the competitive strength of the donating group.

824 773

4. *A Survey of Taro Gifts*

824 431 125 128 One special interest that taro gifts hold for the field anthropologist is their great frequency which opens the possibility of statistical analysis of a fairly large number of gifts of a fairly homogeneous kind. Twenty-two households were visited daily (or almost daily) providing a record of taro gifts made over twenty-eight days from 31 January to 10 March, 1967. Informants were asked to whom they had sent presents during that day and from whom they had received presents. The survey provided useful incidental information about visitors who had been in the village during the day without my knowledge, and about gifts of objects other than taro. For the purpose of analysis I ignored gifts made to persons not resident in the village, as these were scattered over a great many villages and the survey period was not long enough to establish statistical regularities. Waddell reported that 40 per cent of taro gifts were made to persons outside the village (Sivepe), 10 per cent to villages within one mile of Sivepe, 14 per cent to villages situated between one and two miles from Sivepe, 9 per cent to more distant villages and 6 per cent to expatriate centres. (1968: 218). The statistics compiled by Waddell, however, are in terms of weight rather than the number of gifts. A gift of cooked taro made within a village was for one meal only (averaging perhaps 5 lbs.) while a gift of raw taro made to visitors from other villages or at feasts was more likely to weigh at least 25 lbs. Thus the number of gifts made to persons other than villagers was less than 10 per cent of the total.

As I intend to draw some significant conclusions from the statistics of intra-village taro gifts, it is relevant to describe briefly some difficulties I had in collecting these statistics. The fact that households were asked to report on gifts received as well as gifts made provided an effective check, as ideally all items should have been mentioned twice, once by the donor household and once by the recipient household. People very often forgot to tell me of some of the gifts received and made. Some people were most likely to forget what they had received; others would forget what they had given. If my study had been biased towards psychological anthropology, the frequency of these types of memory lapses among individuals might have given me a basis for establishing a typology of exchange partners. I soon found that nobody claimed gifts they had not actually made or received

From the first day of the survey it became obvious that my questions, simple though they seemed, contained an unexpected ambiguity: should the informant

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include gifts to persons of the same household? It would have been easy enough to lay down a rule that this kind of gift should be excluded from the survey and nor mentioned by informants, but I decided that it was not for me to start defining to the Orokaiva what was meant by a phrase like *ba ikari* 'to give taro'. Evidently food given to household members was, in certain circumstances, regarded as a gift. I recorded a total of 265 such 'transactions' from fourteen households during the survey period. Among those who mentioned such 'transactions' were some of my most helpful informants. At the beginning of the survey, household members were only sporadically mentioned but the number of mentions increased as the survey proceeded, until a pattern emerged.[2] A gift of food from wife to husband was never mentioned. A gift to a household member other than a natural or adopted child of one or both of the marriage partners was always included. Married daughters and sons old enough to live in a bachelor's house were always included. What confused informants most was how to regard gifts to younger sons and daughters.

Some parents included their children if they were old enough to be of school age. Others included the boys if they had gone through the 'birthday' ceremony which nowadays takes the place of initiation and included the boys if they had been through puberty seclusion. Others again did not include their dependent children at all. There was no uniform pattern. I ascribe the confusion to two factors: first, it used to be customary for children to start working in the garden at a very early age, doing whatever was within their capacity and making some contribution to the household economy. Boys would be given their own small garden plots at an early age and their sisters would fulfil some feminine tasks (planting, harvesting) in these plots. When schooling became general in the district, the children ceased making that kind of contribution. Secondly, school 'lunches' were mostly taken by the children every morning and eaten on the school grounds. These lunches were identical in form to the intra-village taro gifts: they were a meal of cooked taro cooked by the mother and taken out of the home.

Intra-household taro gifts were reported to me in too inconsistent a fashion to permit statistical analysis, but they were interesting as they revealed the household to be, in itself, a minuscule exchange system. This system was intact to a greater extent in Hohorita, where schooling ends at grade 3, than in Sivepe where adolescents are mostly at school rather than in the garden. At Hohorita adolescents grew and (if they were females) harvested vegetable food, gave this to their mothers, and their mothers fed and looked after them. The same principle applied in Sivepe to adults living with their adult and married children, brothers or sisters. Even very old men and women do what gardening they can to make a contribution. The record shows, in the case of some of these old people, that they made hardly any contribution at all during the survey period. As this was a period when taro was becoming scarce, their small gardens were exhausted, but a few months later some of them would again have crops of their own.

Most of the older people who thus depended on gifts for their sustenance were not fed by one household only, though usually one household bore most of the burden. However, wherever there was a helpless old person, there were always at least two regularly contributing households in addition to the one to which that person was attached. We must distinguish, among the Orokaiva,

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824 431 125 592 between co-residence and commensality, notions which the Orokaiva themselves clearly do not regard as synonymous. Persons who are co-resident are always, in practice, at least in part commensal, they are not necessarily wholly so. Not only old people but also bachelors and young women, single or married, receive gifts of taro from other households of which they are the specific recipients. Food they receive in their own residence may therefore be classed as a gift if they have not supplied raw food to the housewife on the same day.

824 431 621 128 To what extent is there a notion that food gifts should be balanced as between donor and recipient? According to the statistics, perfect balance is uncommon and occurs most often where exchanges are somewhat infrequent. In Table VI/1, I classified households according to the degree of balance in all intra-village taro gifts made to persons resident in other households. The code number 0 indicates perfect balance in the total number of gifts sent and received; the code number 6 indicates an imbalance greater than the proportion 75:25. Intermediate code numbers indicate a lesser amount of imbalance. At first sight, Tables VI/1 and VI/2 suggest that little importance is attached to balance in food gifts. In more than half the households, the total imbalance exceeds the proportion 60:40. Nor does there seem to be an ideological charter enjoining a person who has received a food gift to return that gift in the near future. The donor says he expects no return gift. If one asks him why he has made the gift he never mentions services or gifts received in the past for which he may be reciprocating. He will say, 'because that man is my wife's father's sister's son' or whatever the kinship relation may be.

A more careful look at the figures, however, makes one wonder whether such indifference to balance is the whole story. Some informants stated that though the donor expects no return gift, the recipient often likes to make one. Some families are more punctilious than others in this respect. The most punctilious of all was the leading family of Seho (H5, H12, H13, H14, H20, H21). They all had an imbalance smaller than the proportion 55:45. Only one other household in the sample achieved this low score.

[739] In most of the households where there is an extreme inbalance, the explanation is that the household contains aged people who require help, or that the household is deeply involved in giving help to aged people. This factor accounts for the inbalance in households 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 18, 18a, and 19. The imbalance in households 8 and 9 is explained by the fact that householder 8 was [166] helping householder 9 to build a house. Householders 5, 15, and 17 were immigrants from Garombi who gave more than they received, probably because of an anxiety to become accepted and build up good relations in their new place of residence.

824 431 571 621 Finally, the notion of balance is implicit in the timing of many of the taro gifts. It was a very common practice indeed to make a return gift on the same day as a gift of taro had been received, or on the day immediately following. Though informants told me they were under absolutely no obligation to respond so urgently or to respond at all, the record shows that in practice they frequently did so. We must therefore conclude that the Orokaiva do have some notions which lead them to reciprocate taro gifts, even though there is no rule enjoining immediate balanced exchange.

I would suggest that the Orokaiva proceed from a notion that taro is a

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TABLE VI/1

SIVEPE: TARO TRANSACTIONS BY HOUSEHOLD

Household Code No.	*Total Transactions*	*Sent*	*Received*	*No. of Partners*	*Degree of Imbalance**
1	58	40	18	9	4
2	37	1	36	6	6
3	41	26	15	9	3
4	57	35	22	9	3
5	101	54	47	14	1
6	70	45	25	4	3
7	87	24	63	12	5
8	56	33	23	3	2
9	71	40	31	6	2
10	58	21	35	5	3
11	68	36	32	10	1
12	117	59	58	8	1
13	85	44	41	7	1
14	101	52	49	7	1
15	60	34	26	11	2
16	60	37	23	13	3
17	79	50	29	14	3
18	62	9	53	10	6
18a	48	37	11	10	6
19	81	54	27	9	4
20	84	46	38	12	1
21	82	41	41	8	0

* Code: 0 = larger donor gives exactly 50% of gifts;
1 = larger donor gives 50–55%; 2 = larger donor gives 55–60%;
3 = larger donor gives 60–65%; 4 = larger donor gives 65–70%;
5 = larger donor gives 70–75%; 6 = larger donor gives over 75%.

mediating element in the perpetuation of social relations. Within a village, social relations of some sort exist between almost all the members. In my enquiries in Sivepe I came across only one instance of two men, both resident in Sivepe, who denied having or ever having had social relations of any sort with each other. There may have been one or two more instances I did not detect, but they would be very rare. Social relations between households in a village may range from very distant (when no taro gifts are exchanged) to very intimate (when taro gifts may be made four or more times per week). Many households have social relations which are close but not intimate, symbolised by taro gifts made a few times per month. The frequency of taro gifts is of course not the only way of symbolising intimacy, though it is the sign I found the easiest to quantify. It was my impression that those households which maintained the most frequent informal association with one another were also those who made each other the most frequent taro gifts. These were the households who were deeply dependent

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924 431 621 571 on one another in sentiment, in economic tasks, in political support. They would tend to side with one another in village disputes. Thus, taro gifts were a ritual statement in which one household expressed its desire for close association with another.

Now, on this level of association, mutuality and reciprocity are obviously essential if the association is to be established on an equal footing. The return gift should therefore not be considered principally as an obligation (arising from a 'norm of reciprocity') but as a ritual statement reciprocating the desire to maintain a close association. Here the question of the frequency of gifts is closely connected with the question of how intimate either side wishes the association to be. An increase of the frequency of gifts means a desire for a more intimate association. The recipient may wish to keep the association within certain limits. The Garombi migrants who gave more than they received seemed to be constantly trying to build up new alliances and were welcomed more warmly by some of the old residents than by others.

Failure to make a return gift of course does not always 'mean' that one is not interested in maintaining social relations of the closeness envisaged by the other party. There are many circumstances when people are not immediately in a position to make return gifts. In such cases I would not say that the recipient remains entirely without obligation, but rather that the obligation is delayed indefinitely. Thus a man may say he is giving food to his father or other senior relative because of some benefits received in the past. (He was himself fed by the senior person in his youth; he was helped with his bride-price, etc.) Or else a man will say that when his hosts visit his own village, he will then reciprocate. In fact guests customarily press their hosts to make an early return visit and hosts sometimes feel some obligation to do so. It is a pleasurable obligation no doubt, but it is clear that the purpose of such a journey is not to get one's taro back but to maintain the association.

It follows from this discussion that the households to which the most frequent taro gifts are made are those with which the greatest intimacy is desired. If the recipients, though fully capable of making equally frequent return gifts, reciprocate too half-heartedly, the donor household will probably reduce its gifts to the level acceptable to its partner. If the recipients are not capable of making equally frequent returns, the frequent gifts will continue, and the taro ledger will remain unbalanced. Thus, irrespective of the degree of balance, we may regard high frequency of taro gifts as a generally reliable index of intimacy of association. I am leaving out of consideration here the question, raised by Sahlins (1965), of whether degree of balance is determined by kinship distance. Exchanges of taro have a social as well as an economic aspect. Where the social aspect is uppermost (i.e. where the exchanges are not primarily based on need), they tend to be close and balanced, as long as both partners are satisfied with the prevailing frequency of interaction. Where the economic aspect is uppermost (i.e. where one partner is for some reason unable to harvest his own taro), no *social* importance is attached to imbalance and Sahlins' generalisation would probably hold for the Orokaiva of Sivepe.

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5. *Clusters and Chains, Two Patterns of Intimacy*

How can taro gifts mediate close associations among larger groups than dyads of exchange partners? This involves a complex sociological problem that cannot be solved in the framework of the present study: why do men tend to give disproportionate attention to a very small number of their closest associates and much less attention to a larger group who are still close and trusted friends? A principle of allocation clearly operates here: intimate relationships demand more time and energy than can be devoted to the entire circle of close friends. But it is by no means clear what is the role of intimates as distinct from other valued friends. This hierarchy of association, whatever its explanation, is very evident among Orokaiva, not only in the way in which individuals spend their leisure time and compose their co-operative groups, but also in their allocation of taro gifts among their exchange partners.

In Sivepe the number of exchange partners maintained by a household varies from three to fourteen, with an average of 8.5. The first (i.e. most frequent) partner is involved in an average of 38 per cent of all taro transactions, the second partner in 24 per cent, the third in 12 per cent while the other partnerships account for only 26 per cent of all transactions. It is clear that the first and second partners are in a very privileged position in comparison with the others.

A second way of describing the pattern of intimacy would be to assume that there is some community norm whereby a certain degree of intimacy is expressed by a specific frequency of interaction. My impressions, supported by the statistical data and some generalisations offered by informants, is that each household has a few preferential partners to whom it gives or from whom it receives taro at least twice a week, but often far more frequently. In this sense every household in my sample had at least two preferential partnerships. Ten households out of twenty-two had a third, five households a fourth and one (the Seho clan leader) had five preferential partnerships.

The data show that where households are linked by primary kinship, they mostly set up a 'preferential' taro partnership. Only 30 per cent of preferential partnerships, however, fall in this category. The rest can be accounted for only if land transactions, political considerations, and the total past history of personal relationships and transactions are taken into consideration.

For statistical reasons alone it would seem that preferential partnerships are worth some detailed investigation. They clearly add substantially to the number of intimates on whom an individual can count for support over and above those who can be depended on purely by virtue of membership of the same corporate group. In addition preferential partnerships are of crucial importance as a basis for close co-operation between sets of persons larger than the exchanging dyad.

In Fig. 8, all preferential partnerships in Sivepe are shown in sociographic form. A distinction has been made in the sociogram according to the extent to which social preference is mutual. Households A and B may be said to stand in a 'closest mutual relationship' (marked by a hard line), if B is a first or second partner to A and A is a first or second partner to B. If none, or only one of these conditions are satisfied, the relationship is shown by a wavy line.

Though a full analysis of taro gift patterns has to await separate publication,

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TABLE VI/2

SIVEPE: TARO TRANSACTIONS BETWEEN PREFERENTIAL PARTNERS

Household Code No.	*First Partner*	*Sent*	*Received*	*Second Partner*	*Sent*	*Received*	*Third Partner*	*Sent*	*Received*
1	H17	7	11	H2	16	0	H5	4	3
2	H1	0	17	H3	0	11	H17	1	4
3	H2	12	0	H17	4	4	H4	2	5
4	H5	15	12	H3	5	2	H7	6	0
5	H4	12	14	H6	11	7	H21	11	6
6	H7	33	12	H5	7	11	H4	2	2
7	H6	14	30	H19	5	11	H4	0	6
8	H9	13	16	H10	18	7	H7	2	0
9	H8	15	15	H10	16	7	H13	4	2
10	H8	7	17	H9	7	12	H11	3	4
11	H12	10	11	H20	18	4	H18	6	2
12	H13	17	19	H14	15	19	H11	12	10
13	H14	21	17	H12	19	16	H9	2	3
14	H13	16	21	H12	17	16	H15	6	8
15	H14	8	6	H16	6	7	H12	3	5
16	H17	8	6	H15	7	6	H7	7	0
17	H1	11	5	H16	6	8	H18	7	3
18	H18a	0	15	H17	3	7	H11	3	6
18a	H18	15	0	H19	8	4	H17	3	3
19	H7	24	5	H18a	4	8	H12	5	6
20	H21	28	19	H11	4	8	H5	4	4
21	H20	22	20	H5	6	11	H11	4	1

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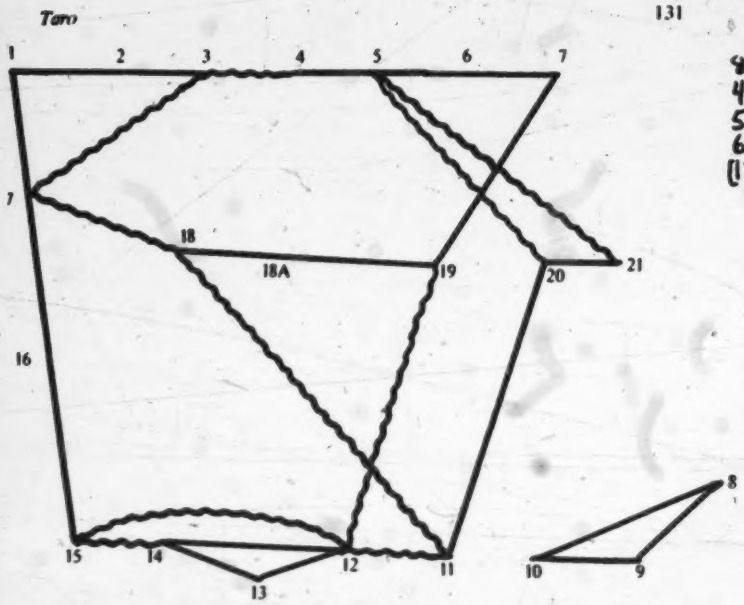

824
431
571
621
(128)

Fig. 8. Taro gifts in Sivepe: sociogram of preferential partnerships. Households are numbered as in Fig. 9 (see p. 202). Straight lines indicate closest mutual relationships, while wavy lines indicate other preferential partnerships.

some generalities are given here, related to our general argument. Taro gifts were used especially to mediate relationships between neighbours, close kin, exchange partners, and with certain persons of special status such as leaders, magicians, and the like. The Garombi immigrants used the system somewhat differently from the old residents, as the former were more actively seeking new partnerships, especially with the more influential old residents.

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[361]

Graph analysis shows two chief patterns: the cluster and the circuit. From the viewpoint of the quality of social relationships, the cluster is obviously to be preferred, as it provides intimate one-degree links between all members of the community. No doubt the Orokaiva's traditional predilection for small villages of six households or so arose from the comfortable feeling that all households could then be intimate with each other. We find several clusters among Sivepe inhabitants, especially among Seho and Sorovi households, but if preferential partnerships did not exist except inside these clusters, the result would be a division of the village into very loosely connected cliques.

In fact, we find a second connecting principle which I have called the circuit, as it resembles the Hamilton circuit familiar in graph theory. A circuit of *n* households (H1, H2, H3 . . . , Hn) is defined as a set in which H2 has a

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824 431 571 621 128 'closest mutual relationship' with H1 and H3; H3 with H2 and H4 and so on. Closure of the circuit is achieved if Hn has a 'closest mutual relationship' with H(n – 1) and H1. The largest such circuit, or near-circuit, connects the great majority of households of all clans and may thus be considered a unifying principle for the village as a whole. The second, much more strongly constructed, links eleven households of the Jegase-Sorovi clans, but includes not a single Seho household. Even though this circuit of ten households contains two flaws (wavy instead of hard lines), it is most improbable that it would turn up by chance.

How circuits are generated in time becomes clear from a study of the recent immigrants from Garombi. Householder 17, before leaving Garombi, had no particularly close links in Sivepe; yet our survey shows him as having two preferential partnerships with old-time Sivepe residents, one Jegase and one Seho (H18 and H16 respectively).

A curious feature is the almost uniform practice of choosing immediate neighbours as preferential partners. It would be too simple, however, to suppose that there is a rule whereby one must have these specially frequent exchanges [361 209] with one's neighbours. Certainly I never found a trace of such a rule. On the other hand there are quite complex considerations in the choice of house sites, such that there is the maximum correspondence between physical and social distance from others in the village. When social relations between neighbours become bad, one of them is liable to shift his house elsewhere, so he can be close to an intimate.

824 431 571 621 128 614 The circuit corresponds remarkably well to the Orokaiva system of clan formation. Thus the Jegase 'clan' in Sivepe is actually constituted by four totally unrelated groups, three of which migrated to Sivepe since the beginning of the century and which gradually grew into a single clan by a process of fusion (See Chapter X). They now occupy six houses and ancillary buildings on the Jegase-Sorovi circuit, and three houses which form a chain attached to that circuit, i.e. a total of nine houses. Each 'lineage' forms a short chain of its own, and the chains are mostly linked together by uterine bonds. Now it is precisely these uterine bonds which brought about the fusion of the groups of migrants into a single clan. Yet this clan was still far more fragmented than Seho. Therefore, there was not much incentive to clustering, which requires far greater intimacy than existed among the Jegase.

824 431 571 621 128 It is precisely the lack of intimacy between small social chains that produced the Sivepe circuits. As we have seen, these circuits are mathematical models built after the reality of residence and taro exchange patterns. It is characteristic of a circuit that no two households share the same 'closest mutual relationships'. Thus H2 and H3 have a 'closest mutual relationship' but H3 does not share the 'closest mutual relationship' between H2 and H1. It is in this respect that a chain is quite unlike a 'minimal cluster'. The chain arrangement has two practical consequences: if H1 falls out with H3, H2 will mediate; and if H1 and H3 wish to co-operate, H2 will normally be a party to the arrangements as these tend to be made in front of his house, in his hearing and probably in his presence. The structure provides for the possibility that H3 may draw in H4, H4 may draw in H5 and so forth. Actual cases of such political action will obviously tend to be

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less tidy but lateral communication by means of intermediaries was a pattern to be frequently observed.

The topographical position of a house was therefore at the same time a fixed position in the taro exchange network and in the network of alliances. One could almost tell from where a person lived what that person would do. When fierce arguments and hot abuse rang through the night as two households held a cutting dispute with each other, those households were likely to live at opposite ends of the village, either at far ends of the chain or at opposite ends of a wider and looser chain of associations which comprised the village as a whole.

The Seho clusters and the Jegase–Sorovi chain were at opposite sides of the village, but were linked to each other by two connecting chains, consisting largely of people who lived at the outer ends of the elongated village rectangle. One of these connecting chains was formed by men who came from Soroputa and who married wives from the Seho clan. (H5, H20-H21, H11, H12.) The other connecting chain consisted of Seho and Sorovi householders whose distinguishing feature was that they maintained rather wide taro exchange networks, had peaceful natures and tried to keep on friendly terms with almost everyone. (H14, H15, H16, H17). The links shown on the sociogram between the Jegase-Sorovi chain and the Seho people are of great interest as they show the degree of closeness between the two main clan formations (Jegase and Seho). Judging from the taro exchange network, these relations are not critically remote but on the other hand not so close that the two sides are in any danger of losing their separate identity.

Leadership in the two clans differed in a manner that is clearly recognisable on the graph. Seho had an aristocratic type of New Guinean 'big man' leadership, the leader (H12) having hardly any real intimates except primary kin who were rather numerous. These primary kin, however, between them, had intimate links with nearly everybody in the village. The leader had preferential partnerships and close connections with a few but not all the Garombi immigrants, using his close contacts as middlemen. The Jegase sociometric star (H5) had a far wider exchange network, including all the Garombi families, and almost nightly there were large gatherings in his *aura*. On the other hand, his primary kin links were far fewer; he depended on the systematic fostering of new associations for his challenge to the Seho leadership. Thus cluster and circuit, the two types of association found in Sivepe, each had its own characteristic form of leadership.

6. *Structural Implications*

We have found that gifts of cooked taro are essentially a woman's gift, and that these gifts, if made continuously at short intervals, are a ritual statement of the maintenance of intimacy between pairs of households. The exchange may be stated formally in the following diagram:

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MODEL 19

How can an exchange model of this sort establish enduring solidarity in a village containing as many as twenty-two households? In a small cluster of households solidarity can be established by the device of every member exchanging with the required frequency with every other member.

But when there are twenty-two households, the same pattern could be maintained only if twenty-one 'closest mutual relationships' were kept up by each household. This is manifestly impossible as the relationships require, not only regular gifts of taro, but also close and frequent association.

Several devices for increasing the range of a solidarity network have been explored in Lévi-Strauss' theoretical study of marriage exchange (1949). They may be classified as various forms of direct and generalised exchange. Theoretically, any of these devices might have been used to cope with the problems of taro exchange. There might have been a rule delaying the return of gifts, or even forbidding the acceptance of taro gifts from those to whom one had given taro. But these devices would have made an exchange network of twenty-two households theoretically feasible. None of them is, in fact, found among the Orokaiva. Instead we found the pattern I called a chain.

The problem which a circuit-like structure attempts to solve is that of establishing or maintaining amity and solidarity between two parties (A and B) who are not linked by bonds of any special intimacy. The procedure followed is that A and B use one or more persons to mediate between them. In the simplest case, where A and B are separated by only one link in the chain, they share the same intimate associate who can act as mediator. If they do not share an intimate, i.e. if they are separated by two or more links in the chain, an accommodation may be reached through a series of mediators who act vicariously on behalf of the principal parties. The arrangement, in its simplest form, is shown in Model 20 which may, of course, be extended indefinitely by inserting intermediate exchange cycles. In practice, this model would be utilised rarely between neighbours living only two houses away from each other. It is, however, a pervasive pattern of Orokaiva social life. It is regularly employed in the making of requests by someone who is not an intimate. A refusal always offends. But if a request is made through a mediator both sides may pretend it has never been made. At least, no hard words are spoken. There is a customary blank, expressionless style which is used for the transmitting of requests – symbolic gestures of neutrality. The mediator avoids all risks of endangering his own alliances while still making what effort he can to satisfy the party seeking the benefit. If the mediator's intervention is successful, this undoubtedly increases his standing and creates an obligation on the part of the beneficiary.

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MODEL 20

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628 In dealings between different villages, the use of a chain of mediators is extremely common. A will approach a fellow-villager B, who has connections in the other village; B will go to the other village and see C, his closest contact. C will then most likely go to D, one of the intimates of the person E with whom A desires to deal, and D will look for E. During the ensuing conversation, A and E will say very little, and it is the intermediaries who do most of the talking.

824 431 621 571 The intimate associate, often a neighbour, is thus extremely valuable, as he opens up a vista of alliances to which his partner has no easy access. A man's effective social network is therefore much wider than any network he could personally maintain by direct exchanges. Most of his effective alliances are vicarious and can be reached only through intermediaries.

The social network maintained by a sizeable circuit is therefore very considerable. It is greater than any solidarity group the Orokaiva could build up by maintaining their patrilineage bonds or by exclusively exploiting any other principle of kin group solidarity. The significance of gifts of cooked taro is that they maintain the intimate bonds needed to retain vicarious access to this network. Cooked taro mediates not only the exchange of intimate attachment, but also the exchange access to *alter's* private network of alliances.

If a village formed a perfect cluster, this kind of exchange could not happen, as all members share exclusively each other's most intimate alliances. Where a circuit structure prevails, a man's partner always has an intimate relationship he does not share, so that the man is dependent on his partner for access to that partner's distinctive exchange network. A society whose solidarity depends heavily on direct immediate exchange may have a rather wide network of alliances as long as it has strong institutional patterns of mediation. The importance of these patterns in Orokaiva society cannot, of course, be gauged by reference to taro exchanges alone, but it is now possible to inquire to what extent the model I have constructed on the basis of taro exchange applies in other areas of Orokaiva culture.

Clearly this model, if transposed to the level of marriage exchange, would include elements of both direct and generalised exchange. The cluster resembles direct exchange: the maintenance of relationships within the system depends entirely on benefits received from all households included in the system. On the other hand the chain has the circular form characteristic of generalised exchange. It includes households who receive no direct benefits from one another except the vicarious one of joint membership in the system. In some respects the chain, of course, differs fundamentally from a system of generalised exchange: the taro travels in both directions around the circle. But I have emphasised that taro is not strictly an object of exchange but of mediation. If there is a need to establish intimate social exchange between remote members of a chain, this will not be, as a general rule, for the exchange of identical benefits. Thus the benefits travelling in each direction along the chain may differ and may not belong to the same sphere of exchange.

While relationships within a cluster are very intimate, those within a large chain may require delicate diplomacy. Yet a chain does not, in my experience, contain members who are actively hostile to one another. The exchange of cooked taro has to to with the maintenance of friendly relations, and collapses if serious conflict arises. The management of serious conflict requires different

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objects of mediation, such as pig meat, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

REFERENCES

1 The propagation of the taro plant (*colocasia esculenta*) is illustrated in Fig. 7.

2 Waddell's survey excluded gifts to household members. This may explain informants' initial hesitance in mentioning them.

into two separate realms: the human world, comprising villages and gardens, and the wild world, *arirl*, the bush, where everything is dangerous and inimical to man, and where the ghosts (*sovai*) have their abode. The area friendly to man is thus reduced to a small space, whereas the area hostile to man is an infinite expanse. Thus man is forever at strife with all but a small circumscribed portion of the universe. The myth of pig-man restates in another idiom the message of the primal theft of the piece of string.

3. *Domestication of Pigs: Husbandry*

Separate though the worlds of bush and human habitation may be, Orokaiva still view them as linked by an exchange relationship. One side of this transaction has already been described in detail by Williams (1930:267ff.). A man becomes a *sovai* at death. As such he enters into various animals. An important class of *sovai* (though not all *sovai*) can be recognised by the abnormal appearance or behaviour of the animals into which they have entered. They are greatly feared and are thought responsible for a great variety of misfortunes. Thus if a man fears the supernatural dangers of the bush, he does not regard these as generated by anything inherent in nature, but as introduced by dead hunters and killers who retain their human wilfulness while deprived of human bonds.

In certain special circumstances bush creatures may re-enter the protected confines of human society. The most important example of such a reverse transaction between bush and village is furnished by the domestication of pigs. There is, of course, no zoological difference between wild and domestic pigs, both being scientifically known as *sus papuensis* and known in the vernacular as *o ohu*. The myths explaining the domestication of pigs are all very simple. In one of them the first pig ever killed by man was a sow marauding the taro gardens. After killing her, men heard a mournful song by the root of a tree. It was sung by her piglets who were thirsting for their mother's milk. The piglets were taken to the village and became the first domestic pigs. The piglets' song, of course, is still known.

The breed has continued until today, being constantly replenished by foundlings from the bush. As boars are castrated, sows mate in the bush. In the bush around Sivepe some wild boars must still exist, though these are probably the offspring of tame sows who have escaped to the bush.

The domestication of piglets is a complicated task which I once saw performed at Inonda. When a piglet was found in the bush it was given for rearing to an old woman who was an expert at domestication. She made a medicine by chewing together betelnut, *hingi* (a peppery leaf) and *arifa* root (in Sivepe *akore* root would have been used). She spat this medicine into all body apertures: mouth, eyes, ears, nose, rectum, genitals. A few hours later she carried the piglet to a creek, washed it and placed it in a string bag (*eti*) in the same way as a baby. Five days afterwards, the piglet could be seen walking through the village on a leash, held by its 'mother'. After two or three weeks, it was regarded as domesticated.

The medicine was intended to seal the piglet from *sovai* who might otherwise enter it. As a bush animal, the piglet was considered impure, dangerous, and liable to spirit entry. The Orokaiva believe that it is *sovai* contamination which

574 782 431 437 [572] successfully cultivated that land, and at the same time no doubt with *dema* figures who instituted agriculture. But most sacrifices have to do with social relations that are either being entered into or that are being restored after a period of hostility. In all such cases the sacrificed pig serves as a gift object to the persons whose friendship is being sought. These persons may be clansmen, uterine kin, affines, bond-friends, trading partners, or persons who have rendered important ritual services.

578 431 571 825 [824] [754] An exhaustive list of examples of such sacrifices, very often involving only one pig and a rather minor ceremony, cannot be given. If a person has broken off social relations with a close relative in anger, by showing this relative his plant emblem, then relations can be restored only if the angry man is persuaded to 'throw his plant emblem away'. If he does this, the person to whom the plant emblem has been shown will sacrifice a pig. Again, if a man feels that he has neglected a fellow clansman for an unduly long time, he will end the estrangement by offering up a pig. A pig may be sacrificed to mark any reconciliation after a quarrel. The sacrificer in such a case appears to admit his own guilt and to restore a wrong done to the other person. Very often such a reconciliation follows a misfortune attributed to sorcery. The medicine man will determine, if the sufferer does not already know, who has caused the sorcery to be performed. It is then considered highly important to arrange a reconciliation with the person responsible for the sorcery. This person is not infrequently a close relative, such as a father's sister or mother's sister. The sufferer will offer up a pig if the dangerous relative is willing to forgive and forget. Sacrifices are also required when a person has violated a taboo, e.g. quarrelled in the presence of a cross-cousin or affine. In all such cases a feast will be held at which the wronged person receives the sacrificial beast.

The same pattern may be found in the larger ceremonies. I shall show in a later chapter that the various prestations rendered between affines can be viewed as propitiatory gifts made to allay anger at the wrong done by the other party. This is certainly true for the gifts made on various occasions by the husband, the husband's sister, etc. to the wife's relatives. Feasts given on the occasion of peace-making, or on other occasions where whole villages are invited can likewise be shown to have as their prime purpose the ending of strife. In all such cases the sacrifice of pigs is preliminary to their utilisation for the mediation of social exchange.

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This pattern does not appear quite consistent with the communion model of sacrifice. Not only is there no rule that the offerers of the sacrifice should eat of the victim; on the contrary, we shall see that they are strictly forbidden to eat of it. The guests carry all the meat away with them and distribute it among their own group. One almost feels that the expiatory model might be applicable: the offerers of the sacrifice define themselves as offenders, they expiate their wrong-doing by sacrifice, the flesh of the victim becomes taboo to them.

782 571 574 431 The contradiction disappears if we regard communion with the god not purely as the ultimate end of sacrifice but also (and simultaneously) as the means to the mediation of a social relationship. I am suggesting that the Orokaiva believe that the killing and offering of a pig is not *in itself* sufficient to initiate or restore a social relationship: it is also necessary to make the offering in a properly ritual manner. The ritual involves the establishment of communion

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We shall need to consider exchange from two points of view: first, as in the preceding chapters, we may consider it phenomenologically, from the viewpoint of the transactional polarity of the exchange partners; secondly, we may consider it from the viewpoint of symbolic thought, as something like the dialogue between *Yin* and *Yang*, as the product of Orokaiva intelligence reflecting upon affective experience.[1] It is this second approach which will be appropriate for much of our discussion about the remarkable Orokaiva myth of the coconut and the betelnut.

2. *The Minor Foods: Objects of Mediation and Paired Symbols*

Although this chapter will deal mainly with the coconut and betelnut, it will be useful first to set this couple into a wider ecological and cultural context. Coconut and betelnut have been chosen for detailed treatment out of a large number of minor foods of the Orokaiva, many of which have their special importance as objects of mediation. An interesting aspect of these minor foods is that Orokaiva symbolic thought arranges them in couples to which a male/female opposition is usually ascribed. Very often these plant couples are grown in close association with one another and it is claimed that they will not prosper unless they are planted together and that, in their wild state, they are also found together. The symbolic association of these pairs of plants may be based on any of a number of shared characteristics: the similar outward appearance of the fruit, a coincidence in the time of fruiting, a similarity in culinary use, in taste, in supposed physiological effects of the fruit when eaten. Sometimes the pair of plants are linked in ritual use and in a common myth.

Among examples of this pairing tendency that may be quoted are two varieties of breadfruit, called *oga* and *eumba*; two condiments important in initiation ritual: the *puga* nut and the salt vine *hoe*; the yam and a red fruit called *hamesi*. The coconut (*vu*) and betelnut or *areca* (*su*) are similarly a pair of subsidiary foods between which there are important points of resemblance which led to their being paired together, and important points of difference which led one of them to be classified as male and the other as female.

Coconut and betelnut are planted together in villages and also in gardens. Both nuts are eaten raw, young coconuts for refreshment, *areca* for relaxation, and both are consumed between meals. Both nuts grow on palms. Both foods have notable (though different) biochemical effects on those who eat them. Both foods are standard gifts made to strangers who visit a village, a coconut being offered as refreshment immediately upon arrival while betelnut is chewed (along with *hingi* pepper and lime) during the conversation. The two nuts are also associated in ritual use. At mortuary feasts, the most important gift objects are large quantities of betelnuts and coconuts harvested from the palms of the deceased, while dry coconut and betelnut are strewn on graves by affines of the deceased. Finally, coconut and betelnut are associated in an important myth which I intend to discuss in detail.

In studying plant couples such as coconut and betelnut two aspects of exchange need to be considered: first, exchanges between persons in which the food products appear as objects of mediation and secondly, mythical exchanges between the male and female plant, where the two plants appear as exchange

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824 772 partners, while objects of mediation are not imaginary and magical, but have a real existence. I shall deal with these two aspects in turn.

3. *Coconut as an Object of Mediation*

824 [252] [262] [272] [431] Coconut has several culinary uses: it is eaten raw; soup is made of the flesh; the squeezed flesh produces coconut cream in which taro and delicacies such as river crabs may be cooked. Young coconuts are cut open at the top and used for a refreshing drink. Coconut is reserved for two kinds of everyday food gift: cooked dishes offered to guests and young coconut offered to visitors on arrival. Waddell's figures for coconut transactions are surprisingly low (less than 1 lb. per week disposed of in an average household). In Inonda, where the climate favours the coconut, there has been sporadic commercial exploitation of the nut.

[574] Coconuts are also a feasting food. At ordinary harvest feasts and bridewealth payments they are seen on display platforms along with taro and other [262] vegetables. Williams (1930: 44) reports that they used to be placed under a taboo when a large feast was pending. I have already mentioned that at mortuary [764] feasts they are the principal object of mediation between the plant emblem group of the deceased and the village which has provided services to the deceased at the time of death (See Williams 1930: 223–6). I saw a variant of this ceremony at Hohorita in 1967. The plant emblem groups of the deceased couple provided massive gifts displayed on a platform: feast taro, tins of fish, cartons of flour, corned beef in tins, sugar-cane, pots of cooked vegetable food, small bags of salt, smoked meat, a dead pig suspended from a stick, rice, bread, an abundance of betelnut and carved taro suspended from horizontal poles placed above the platform, while at least 1000 lbs. of coconuts, strung to poles supporting each other diagonally, were seen everywhere among the other gifts.

[262] [146] Coconut is correctly believed to be a valuable adjunct to children's diet, as it provides first-class protein. The belief is explained by Orokaiva in a myth quoted by Williams (1928: 122) according to which the first child ever to eat a coconut grew miraculously overnight. Children do eat a good deal of it and it is also fed [231] regularly to dogs and chickens. Orokaiva also regard the effects of coconuts on [235] dogs as miraculous. As neither dogs nor children have any other substantial supply of first-class protein, the coconut relieves a very real diet deficiency. Whatever religious significance is given to the coconut is related to this.

824 778 Coconut oil is used as a cosmetic for hair and body, not only to enhance beauty but also for its magical efficacy. In a ritual performed over a man-slayer, a coconut was broken over his head as a purificatory and 'defensive' device in [302] the sense that the fluid would drive away dangerous spirits (1930: 175). With [789] the same end in view, the bodies of female initiands and certain ornaments worn at dances are rubbed with coconut oil (1930: 207). It would appear, in view of [881] this evidence, that the coconut is in general identified with *ivo* communicated by the dead to the living. The coconuts of a dead leader are thought to contain his *ivo* in a form which is communicable, not to his kinsmen to whom these [761] coconuts are taboo, but particularly to his affines. The quoted ritual uses of the coconut are all associated with some contact with the world of death, i.e. critical situations in which the living have been in contact with death and need the help [764] of the dead to obtain *ivo*. While this *ivo* is communicated, through the mediation

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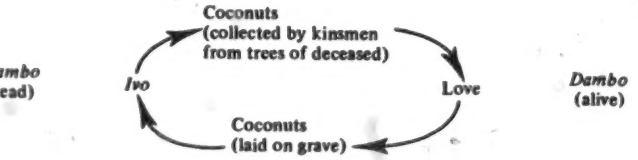
of coconut gifts, in a great variety of sometimes quite casual relationships, the most crucial communication occurs in the large-scale, highly structured mortuary feast where we may regard the archetypal exchange situation as occurring between brothers-in-law (*dambo*), one of whom is dead while the other is alive. The exchange cycle is as follows:

MODEL 28



4. Areca *as Object of Mediation*

Areca, a mildly narcotic fruit, is chewed with lime and pepper (*hingi*) when persons, often from different households, are sitting together to relax and talk. It is always offered when friendly visitors arrive from other villages. It is chewed by women as much as by men, though by Waddell's statistics men act more frequently as donors of *areca* in the exchange network (71 per cent of recorded cases). *Areca* is the only Sivepe food product of which, by Waddell's statistics, more than half the disposals are to other than village residents. Table VIII/1 summarises the number of transactions but does not show that Sivepe is an exporter of betelnut, while lime is imported. Much of this export is in barter but sales for money also occur.

When friends from the same village are sitting together betelnut is shared in much the same way as beer in our culture, i.e. people offer nuts to each other but expect to come out approximately even. At visits to another village, it is more common for the principal visitor to make a bulk donation. The hosts share out betelnut among their guests either by throwing a few nuts to each person or (on more formal occasions) by the principal host presenting the principal visitor with a large bunch, leaving the latter to share them out among his people. The visitors also hand a nut to anyone in the host group who has no nut to chew. The two principals will distribute some of the *areca* they have received to chosen persons within their own group.

Betelnut is treated as a valuable commodity. It is never given away in heaps like ordinary garden crops. Its value is undoubtedly associated with its narcotic properties. At social gatherings its main effect appears to be that it creates a relaxed and genial atmosphere, breaking down hostility otherwise likely to exist between groups. Its magical use is so widespread that its supposed effect is hard to determine from the evidence of medicines. Many medicines consist of *areca* chewed with some specific purpose, and as such it is applied in hunting magic, magic for drumming, and magic against a variety of diseases.

In ritual its role is often the same as coconut, e.g. at mortuary feasts. The exchange cycle shown in model 28 applies similarly to betelnut. Yet, just as its

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TABLE VIII/1

'ARECA' TRANSACTIONS: SIVEPE AND INONDA

The following figures group together transactions involving *areca* nuts and lime used for chewing with *areca*.

(*Source*: Waddell and Krinks, 1968: 180, 210, 218, 237, 265, 270, 272)

	Sivepe		*Inonda*	
	Acquired	*Disposed*	*Acquired*	*Disposed*
Total transactions (lbs.)	124	114	93	39
Distribution (%)				
within village	56%	44%	30%	57%
outside village	44%	56%	70%	43%
Non-monetary transactions (lbs.)	107	100	83?	38?
Monetary transactions (lbs.)	17	15	9.8	1.0
($)	3.70	3.00	2.06	0.20
Donors and recipients by sex: Men	52%	71%	42%	36%
Women	48%	29%	58%	64%

biochemical action differs from that of the coconut (narcotic rather than nutritive), so its symbolic significance in magic and ritual also differs. A girl carries a bunch of betelnut at the ceremony concluding her seclusion after first menstruation. She also has betelnut to offer to a man at lovers' meetings.

The only betelnut myth recorded by Williams (1928: 123) emphasises the nut's aphrodisiac associations. The betel palm had a liaison with a village woman. Every night it bent over her house to visit her; every morning, as the birds woke, it bent back to stand once more as an immobile palm but left around her house a litter of small flowers. When the intrigue was discovered, the jealous husband cut down the palm. The lover cried as he fell: 'Now I am a man no longer but a mere betel palm; take these nuts and eat them.' This myth resembles the one collected by myself in that the hero was a male, although the *areca* palm is classified by Orokaiva as a female plant. The explanation of this remarkable discrepancy will be one of the main tasks of the present chapter.

The symbolic significance of the betelnut is not, however, exhausted by its role as a catalyst in sexual love. One may call it, more properly, a catalyst in any kind of social exchange. As such, it helps to restore amity between former enemies. Its narcotic action raises the spirits of both opponents to the sphere of primal time when no strife existed. In sexual love, according to Orokaiva, feminine sexuality is dangerous, even lethal, to man in certain circumstances, a notion which is reflected in a number of avoidances woman must practice in order to avoid polluting and ritually killing a man. In courtship, the woman must take the initiative; the man is represented as slow and reluctant, precisely

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because of the dangers he fears from contact with the female. By offering betelnut, woman overcomes this reluctance in man and draws him into the sexual exchange she desires.

5. *The Myth of Coconut and Betelnut*

Though we have now summarised the exchange cycles mediated by coconut and betelnut, we have not shown why these objects of mediation are considered to be efficacious in exchange. In past chapters we have explained efficacity in terms of indigenous philosophy. Indigenous logic generally relies on a myth in which a specific precept is either explicitly stated or implied. By giving this precept the status of an axiom, we can show by logical deduction that a thing (land, taro, pig, etc.) can have potency as an object of mediation in certain transactions.[2]

This kind of explanation of mediation draws on mythical sources much in the same way as Malinowski. Malinowski held that the 'function' of a myth is the charter it provides for customary rules. I can see no objection to this approach as long as we can be sure, from independent evidence, that charter and custom really coincide, which is not always the case, and as long as we check carefully how informants perform the logical deduction. If charter and custom do not coincide, we need to go beyond Malinowski's techniques of myth analysis and seek out the message by decoding the symbolic language of the myth. The betelnut myth already quoted provides an instance of discrepancy between myth and custom.[3] According to the myth it is the man who gives betelnut to the woman, whereas we know that in girls' initiation ritual and in courting custom, i.e. in the most structured betelnut presentations, the *woman* plays the role of donor and the plant is classified as feminine.

Such a discrepancy might easily be dismissed as too trivial for investigation but for the fact that it seems to be related to the disagreement between Mauss and Lévi-Strauss to which I referred earlier in this chapter. Mauss' theory of the gift would not easily explain this type of reversal, which would serve as a useful corroboration of Lévi-Strauss' contention that the 'contradiction' in the donor-recipient relationship may be illusory. I am not suggesting that his theory can be proved by empirical evidence, but only that it can be corroborated if we find evidence that Orokaiva informants do not treat exchange as purely magical, but recognise its synthetic character in their reasoning about myth, ritual and rules of behaviour.

The beginning of the myth to be discussed here is well-known; I was told it several times and Williams also recorded it (1928: 122). Here follows a summary of a version I collected on tape in the Orokaiva language: A beautiful girl, noted for her remarkable breasts, has the misfortune to kill all the young men with whom she sleeps. Her breasts prick and kill them. She warns them to sleep against her back but they never follow this advice. The girl's brother becomes concerned and tells her that he personally will choose her next sleeping partner. He chooses his own *dambo*, i.e. his wife's brother. He tells his *dambo*:

> Because mistakes were made other bachelors have died, but, my *dambo*, my true *dambo*, she is going to sleep; she is going up to bed. Therefore see that all is properly prepared and the bed is properly made for sleeping.

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773 824 539 But this handsome young man, also, is pierced by the girl's breasts and killed. The brother buries his brother-in-law, then kills his sister and buries her beside the other grave.

After a mourning period the brother takes his wife to the two graves. They find a cocopalm in full bearing above the sister's grave. An *areca* palm has grown over the grave of the young man. Heaps of dry nuts are lying on the ground. That is how these two palms originated. He says:

> Wife, as we come close, we see coconut and *areca* growing where only grass grew before. Dry coconuts have fallen and are rotting away; dry *areca* nuts are growing shoots. It can be seen from my sister's grave that she was a creature of misfortune (*embavo*) and that the bachelors' deaths were her doing.
>
> The coconuts growing in the grave must stay there and the *areca* growing on *dambo's* grave must likewise stay. See to it.

The hero opens a dry coconut, then a budding coconut. Though he declares that he will die if he eats these nuts, his wife desires them, they are so delicious. He feeds them to the dog, expecting it to die, but it does not. He then declares:

> Wife, cocopalms are growing in my sister's grave, but the flower clusters on the stem have pointed sheaths (*peperuma*) which puncture the skin and make men die. It is always said that people die when that happens. The mass of sheaths will strike men with the sleep of death; when the sheaths have struck, men will die utterly. That was the cause of the girl's death. When I came here and saw coconut growing out of her grave and dry nuts fallen on the ground, I began to understand that my sister had killed the men I had carried to their graves and buried. . . .
>
> When a man has collected *areca*, he gives it back to a girl. When that girl has helped to fetch coconut, she in turn gives it to the man. It therefore belongs to the man. This being so, the coconut is a man but the *areca* is a girl; for this reason, girls give *areca*.

773 824 539 582 On the level of social structure, this myth is concerned with the Orokaiva institution of sister exchange marriage. Though such arrangements were not very frequent among the Orokaiva (I would estimate about 5 per cent of all marriages), sister exchange marriages are strongly idealised, as I have shown elsewhere. In this myth, a man arranges such an exchange marriage for his sister because he evidently believes it provides more protection against magical dangers than any other. When this ends in disaster, the brother feels entitled to assume there is no bachelor with whom his sister can sleep safely, as he explains in a passage not quoted here. He therefore kills her, but right through the story his *dambo* (wife's brother) continues to be regarded as husband of his sister. It is for him, rather than for any other man she has slept with and killed, that she grows coconuts. In fact it is the bond of love between the dead couple which gives the whole tale its meaning. The closeness of this bond is not explained psychologically by personal sentiments existing between the lovers, but structurally, by sister exchange marriage.

773 824 539 On the level of social exchange, the myth depends largely on rather complex and condensed ideological statements made by the hero. I have translated the

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crucial passages verbatim. In the full text, the brother comes back four or five times to the miracle that chiefly concerns him: the symbiosis of coconut and areca, dropping their fruits side by side and thus (as he implies rather than states) fertilising one another. Taking this symbiosis as a fact of nature, the hero uses it to explain several other mysterious facts: (*a*) why all the bachelors died; (*b*) the ritual uses of coconut and *areca*; (*c*) why the Orokaiva consider coconut masculine, *areca* feminine. To answer the first question, he refers to an easily verified fact: the *peperuma* of the coconut do look like a girl's breasts; they are very dangerous if one falls upon them with any force. His sister was clearly an *embavo*, a coconut spirit. In this way the deaths are, to Orokaiva thought, adequately accounted for.

The hero explains two types of ritual uses of coconut and *areca*, namely those related to mortuary feasts and those where the sex of the recipient of the nuts is opposite to that of the donor. The instruction that nobody should eat the nuts lying under the trees, on pain of death, constitutes a mythological charter for the taboo placed upon the cocopalms and *areca* palms owned by a person recently dead. An informant explained a further implication to me, which is not very clear from the version I quoted: namely that it is customary to place coconuts and *areca* nuts upon the grave of a dead affine. Thus it was the duty of the hero to place coconuts and *areca* nuts upon the grave of his brother-in-law; and the duty of his wife to do the same for the grave of her sister-in-law. In order to clarify these points, the myth tells of the wife's desire to eat the nuts and the hero's refusal to let her have them.

In a somewhat elliptical manner, the hero lists or implies three sets of rules concerning gifts of coconut and *areca*, where the sex of the recipient of the nuts is opposite to that of the donor. The sets are:

	Areca	*Coconut*
1(*a*)	The man fetches the nuts from the tree.	1(*b*) The woman *helps to fetch* the nuts from the tree.
2(*a*)	The man gives the nuts to the woman.	2(*b*) The woman cooks the nuts for the man.
3(*a*)	The girl offers nuts to her lover and carries an offering of nuts at initiation.	3(*b*) At a girl's initiation, a man prepares coconut oil which is used as a ritual cosmetic.

The first opposition is made quite explicit in the hero's speech, but is not free from casuistry. Men usually fetch not only *areca* but also coconuts from the high palms on which they grow. The woman may help by collecting coconuts once they have dropped to the ground, and by carrying them home. Very often, however, the coconuts are carried by men, who tie two nuts to a stalk, thus creating a huge effigy of a phallus. The feeble empirical basis of this opposition only serves to emphasise that we are here being taught an ideology which requires the opposition.

The hero's second opposition centres on the culinary use made of the nuts. *Areca*, in opposition to coconut, has no place in the kitchen. The fact that coconut is also often eaten raw would weaken the opposition, but this is

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suppressed. The third opposition is in fact the strongest, but it is stated in a rather elliptical manner. We are told that, in ritual, girls give *areca* to men, but the opposite statement is omitted, viz. that in the same initiatory context *men* (but never women) pour coconut oil over girls.

In the narrator's mind all these oppositions are probably subordinate to a philosophical question: why the Orokaiva consider coconut masculine, *areca* feminine. Numerous informants have confirmed this classification in conversations with me. In this story, however, it is not presented as a 'fact', but is deduced in a logical manner. The words used make it clear that we have to do with a logical deduction:

> *Ainge* embo amina ainge ena. Embo amina *ainge eto*, erevi u ra embo erevi u ra; te sa erevi meni kakara ra; – *ainge eto* ikena.

This passage, (translated above, p. 17) contains the notion of logical entailment three times: *because* the girl gives coconut to the man, it *therefore* belongs to the man. *Because* coconut belongs to a man, *therefore* coconut is masculine. *Because areca* is a girl, girls give *areca*. The problem, for those who do not know Orokaiva culture, is that every one of the conclusions appears to lack logical force. Furthermore, it will be noticed that, from a formal viewpoint, the narrator's argument proceeds quite differently for men and for girls. This difference also needs explanation.

When I heard this tale, I could not help arguing with my informant. I said: if the coconut grew out of the girl's grave and she later gave the coconut to a man, would it not follow then that the coconut is feminine? My informant received this argument with a tinge of pity. It proved to him, if any proof were needed, that white men are indeed quite incapable of abstract reasoning. It took him some time to understand what problem I could possibly be having. Finally he said: 'The girl intended these coconuts as gifts for a man; therefore, they must be masculine.' At that point I remembered I had heard this argument somewhere before: in Levi-Strauss' introduction to Marcel Mauss, *Sociologie et anthropologie*. If we produce something that is *intended to be given away*, it was called into being by a prior relationship between donor and recipient, and could not be utilised by the former without losing its predetermined nature.

We find the same line of thought elsewhere in Orokaiva culture: pigs cannot be eaten by those who reared them because they are, from the beginning, set apart as gift objects. The most striking and intimate instance may be found in a myth of a woman who has a detachable vagina. She pretends to her husband she has lost it: 'I dropped your vagina in the water.' The husband looks for it between the stones of the river: 'I am looking for my vagina.'

In all these cases the gift object partakes of the nature of the recipient. However, the narrator appears to follow a quite different line of reasoning when he says. 'Because *areca* is a girl, girls give *areca*.' There is an apparent contradiction here, resolved only when we recognise that two different types of gift must be distinguished – perhaps we are allowed to call them metaphoric and metonymic. If we call a coconut a man or a man a coconut, we are using a metaphor. Furthermore, if we proceed to call an *areca* 'a girl', we are setting up a metaphoric opposition (coconut/*areca*) which corresponds to the real opposition (man/woman). When Sperber (1968) speaks of 'code structures', he is

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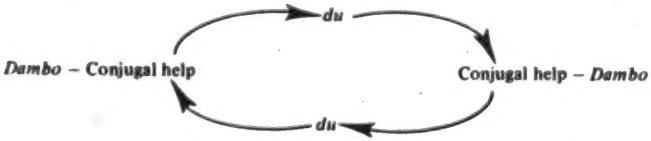
principally referring to classificatory systems built up from such metaphoric oppositions. When I use the term 'metaphoric gift', I mean a gift about which we are told in a story, the message of the story being that gift and recipient are metaphorically identical. The point of the story is to establish the symbiosis of men and women, the use of the metaphor. An example of such a story would be the gift of sacred emblems to the infant Dionysus in Orphic myth. This story tells us how Dionysus received certain gifts (cone, bullroarer, golden apples, mirror, knuckle-bone, tuft of wool) which defined his nature. In the same way, in Orokaiva myth, men are given a coconut nature and women an areca nature.

Orokaiva informants offer what they regard as empirical evidence for this. Coconut may be recognised as a man because the palm germinates slowly and the fruit comes to maturity slowly ('it comes slowly'). Likewise, so I was told, the male is slow to be sexually aroused and to desire women. *Areca* may be recognised as a girl because it germinates and comes to maturity quickly – the fruit matures faster than the coconut. Likewise woman is quick to be sexually aroused and to feel desire for a man. In this analogy the botanical facts are evident but the psychological generalisations describe no more, perhaps, than Orokaiva role expectations.

We may clarify the myth and its philosophical message to a certain extent by an analysis on the level of exchange cycles. The fundamental cycle is obviously the following:

MODEL 29



This is the model of sister exchange marriage where two men become brothers-in-law by each giving their sisters (*du*) to the other in marriage. If we now remember the identification between woman and betelnut (*sā*), and the social relationship which is considered normal between *dambo*, we may substitute as follows:

MODEL 30

We thus derive the rather interesting conclusion that the sense of an exchange of betelnut between men is that they are symbolically exchanging sisters. This is a rather bold conclusion which is best left as a speculation to be explored in later

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enquiries. The same applies to a second conclusion that may be derived from the myth: that a man who gives a visitor coconut to drink is symbolically giving his own sexuality.

6. *Analysis of the Myth*[4]

As these implications of the model may arouse scepticism, a more analytical study of the myth seems desirable. One procedure which may lead to clarification is to compare the coconut/betelnut myth with the myth of Totoima discussed in previous chapters. The structural homology between the two myths is obvious enough. In the Totoima myth a *man wittingly* killed and *ate* a *son*, was transformed into *pig meat*, and distributed to mankind. He *did not intend* to make any gifts nor were any intended for him. In the coconut myth a *woman unwittingly* killed but *did not eat* a *spouse*, was transformed into *coconut*, distributed to mankind. She *intended* to make a gift and a return gift was intended for her.

We may isolate three distinctive features. On the ecological level we find an opposition between two types of symbiosis. The Totoima myth shows a predatory cycle: pig eats taro; man eats pig; thus strengthened, man causes more taro to grow. The coconut/betelnut myth shows the association of two plants always growing together, such that the presence of the one may be thought to stimulate the growth of the other. On the social level we find an opposition between the kin relationships holding between the principal participants. They may be represented as follows:

In the Totoima myth, the critical transaction was between the senior and junior generation, while in the coconut/betelnut myth it was between the male and female characters. Psychologically, the opposition was that in the Totoima myth the protagonists were motivated to kill and eat each other, while in the coconut/betelnut myth they were motivated by sexual love.

Both myths are concerned with exchange, viewed ecologically, socially and psychologically, but in the first myth exchange is diachronic, whereas in the second it is contemporaneous. Where exchange is diachronic, B cannot reach the fullness of prosperity without the death of A, a process symbolised ecologically by predation, on the social level by intergenerational competition and on the psychological level by the desire to kill the father. Where exchange is contemporaneous, B cannot reach the fullness of prosperity without the simultaneous prosperity of A, a process symbolised ecologically by plant associations, socially by the marriage relationship and psychologically by conjugal love.

Diachronic exchange is, on the ecological level, a familiar and empirically verifiable fact. On the social level, however, the competitive and negative aspect

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CHAPTER IX

ORNAMENTS

1. *Introduction*

Exchanges mediated by ornaments may be studied in very much the same way as those mediated by coconut and betelnut. This means that (1) ornaments may serve as symbols of identity; (2) this symbolic quality attached to ornaments makes them suitable to serve as objects of mediation.

A symbol of identity, in the sense intended here, is an object which, if shown or given to another person, reveals the identity of its owner. A plant emblem is, in this sense, a symbol of identity, as anyone who sees it lying on the path knows the identity of the person who put it there. More specifically, the finder of the plant emblem knows that the person who dropped it is a member of a specific group which has the right to use this emblem and which is identified with it. Identity, in this instance,[1] is not defined as attached to an individual but rather as attached to a class, and the individual who uses the plant emblem is stating his membership of that class. Furthermore, identity in this sense must always have been *received from* someone. Membership in a plant emblem group is conferred by a father or mother. It is not a gift but an automatic result of filiation. As such it is symbolic of the system of rules governing co-operation within the corporate group.

An ornament may be ceremonially conferred upon a person who will henceforth regard it, in the same sense, as a symbol of identity. The ornament is then called an *otohu*, a term to be defined later. It is worn by its owner and those who see it recognise it as a symbol of its owner's moral integrity. It indicates that the owner has pledged to act in accordance with a historically established behaviour model. Therefore, in this instance again, identity is not defined as attached to an individual but rather as attached to a class of persons who follow this behaviour model. Furthermore, again, identity in this sense must always have been received from someone. It is not conferred necessarily by the wearer's father, but may come from any other male consanguine (or even affine) of the ascending generation. It is not conferred automatically; there is no rule saying that it should be conferred and it is not conferred upon everyone. The *otohu* is, in fact, always a gift. As such it is symbolic of a pledge made by the wearer that he regards himself as bound by the system of rules governing exchange between other corporate groups and his own.

Although it is usual for persons to own more than one ornament, I have not heard of any owning more than one *otohu*. The *otohu* is distinguished from other ornaments (*hambo*) by the addition of some special feature which constitutes its mark of identity. *Otohu* are not given away except in special

ceremonial circumstances, but *hambo* are freely exchanged between partners. All the characteristics already described of such objects of mediation as land, taro and pigs probably apply equally to *hambo*, though my evidence on this point is far less complete, due to the very large number of magical substances that enter into the construction of *hambo*. They are not, however, symbols of identity.

On a functional level, one may regard the *otohu* after the analogy of a membership badge to some association or even a credit card. It indicates to others that they can safely carry on transactions with the bearer. On a structural level, the two types of identity symbol – the plant emblem or *hae* and the *otohu* – constitute, in combination and in their interrelation, the reality of the entire Orokaiva social system. This system is dominated by two principles: corporate groups bound to a system of rules governing their co-operation and a system of exchange between corporate groups on which they depend for vital benefits. The *hae* symbolises membership of the corporate group whereas the *otohu* symbolises participation in the system of exchange. There are several significant symbolic contrasts: the *hae* is a natural object (usually a plant), never given or lent to anyone, deposited as a sign to members of the corporate group that corporate rights have been used by the depositor, but never openly shown except to signal anger felt towards members of the corporate group and a resolve to break the relationship. In contrast the *otohu* is a cultural object, lent to relatives who are entitled to wear it, but otherwise never deposited or transferred, and always shown conspicuously by the owner when he contemplates transactions outside the corporate group.

While a *hae* is transmitted automatically, the conferring of the *otohu* is an important ceremony that will be discussed in detail in this chapter. This discussion will be followed by a summary of the available evidence on the use of *hambo* (other than *otohu*) as objects of mediation in social exchange.

2. *The Nature of Otohu Ornaments*

Most ornaments are acquired by hunting, foraging, barter, purchase or inheritance. These may be regarded purely as decorations (*di* or *hambo*) and there are no restrictions on who may make or wear such ornaments, which are freely disposed of by barter or sale. The *otohu* is not distinguishable from other *hambo* except on the basis of specific knowledge of local practice. Some families have a particular shell which is their *otohu*, others may use a particular arrangement of hornbill beaks. Others again may have a special way of decorating armlets of white cuscus (*pauri*). There are many very beautiful and elaborate *hambo* which are not *otohu* and other much simpler ornaments which are *otohu*. Where large shells are *otohu* these are worn by themselves, on the chest or suspended on the side of the owner's betelnut bag. Other *otohu* are added to what would otherwise be an ordinary *hambo*: it is the addition of the *otohu* object which makes a *hambo* into an *otohu*.

In the earliest literature on the *otohu* it was regarded as an 'homicidal emblem'. Beaver (1920) reported that a man-slayer, having undergone some form of purification or exorcism, might at some convenient time receive his *otohu*. He gave two lists of objects that were supposedly so used, one for the coastal and central tribes (eight items) and one for the Wasida and trans-Kumusi

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Hence, *otohu* might serve as symbols of high social status whereas *hambo* are less useful in this regard, being worn only intermittently and never with a purely social purpose in mind.

The usefulness of *otohu* as status symbols is further enhanced by the fact that they are transferable from generation to generation. The Member of the House of Assembly for the Northern District told me he always carried his *otohu* with him when meeting his constituents and that he would display it conspicuously attached to his betelnut bag, because a great many people would know this *otohu*: it had belonged to his *epe* who had been a famous war chief and sorcerer. He believed that people in his constituency had great respect for this *otohu*. He made it sound almost as though he was carrying the *insigne* of a hereditary chieftainship, but in fact the basis of his influence was far more complex: it was in part agnatic, in part uterine, and in large part personal. Nonetheless, the *otohu* was obviously very useful to him in establishing new social relations.

Whatever social effect a *hambo* might have would depend mostly on the beauty of its construction and the rarity of its materials. While informants might sometimes think its history and associations worthy of mention, a *hambo*'s association with a particular family is usually rather loose, as the right to wear *hambo* of a particular type is never, to my knowledge, restricted to a family. The main effect and power of a *hambo* appears to be aesthetic. It is used to impress partners in a dispute, dancing partners or young women whose passions one hopes to arouse.

Unlike the *otohu*, the *hambo* does not otherwise emphasise the identity of the wearer. One the contrary, a fully decorated person, wearing a head-dress, *hambo* and face-paint, is supposed not to be recognisable as a person. One should on no account address him by name. He represents an *embahi* and, as such, is completely depersonalised. More specifically, the dancer represents a natural species – a pig, a wallaby or, in the case of women, a bird, a butterfly, a flower. The details of these identifications need to be studied more closely. The significance of the decorations is very similar to that of the masks used for dancing in other parts of New Guinea. The face and body become a medium for decorating: the individual assumes the persona of an ancestor; his private existence is covered over to display only his social function.

This total lack of personal identity inherent in the *hambo* makes the object easily transferable from one individual to another. It always belongs essentially to the ancestors and is thus alive with spirit. By transferring it to another, a man emphasises that he and the recipient share some link with the spirit world and this implies amity, the primeval absence of strife. It also probably implies in some way the message of the sacred flutes by which man's contact with the spirit world is established. Further research no doubt will enable us to be more precise about the meaning of these transactions. They occur in a great many social contexts: *hambo* are given away to settle a quarrel, to pay bridewealth, to establish and maintain an important friendship. They are frequently lent to persons about to dance at a feast, and a gift of meat is then required from the borrower. They are lent by the *kogumbari* expert for a similar consideration, and are also bartered and sold. Some people, and not always the most prominent, make large collections of them, and most people of rank have a good store of them, as they are a necessary part of the ceremonial gift exchange system. From

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431 of the 'husband' who either gives a woman in exchange (direct marriage
121 exchange) or else makes some kind of reparation for having deprived his
562 exchange partner (generalised marriage exchange).
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REFERENCES

824 1. Erikson, describing 'the beginnings of identity' in the adolescent, comes
571 rather close to what I have in mind in this chapter: 'The emerging identity bridges the stages of childhood when the bodily self and the parental images are given their cultural connotation: and it bridges the stage of young adulthood, *when a variety of social roles become available and, in fact, increasingly* coercive.' (1963: 235).

881 2. A person who receives a token is referred to in this chapter as an 'initiate', as Williams makes it very clear the the bestowal of the token is not a necessary part of initiation, and comes after the ceremony which makes an 'iniation' into an 'initiate'.

000 3. I am using Beaver's spelling, as Beaver (1920) is the source for Williams' and my own information about *kortopo*, but Williams spells the word *kotopo*.

614 Similarly, the fact that these groupings together call themselves a clan (*javo wahai*) does not imply the actual existence of agnatic connection. The term means 'one name', and that is all they share, except for uterine links which buttress the social relations between them. The clan name is important as a symbol of political identification. The close bonds between the clan segments are evident in residence patterns, in daily intercourse and mutual assistance in practical matters, though not in ritual or other formal organisation.

614 824 The second principle of grouping is the plant emblem (*hae*), already recognised by Williams (1925, 1930) as important in the Orokaiva social system. Williams describes it as 'a distinctive emblem or associate' of a clan, though he recognised it could belong merely to a segment of a clan. Most of them are vegetable species, though almost any natural or cultural object may be designated as *hae*. Williams lists three main uses: as an identity token (to mark a visit by the owner), as a mark of individual abstinence (a self-inflicted taboo, usually shown to indicate a grievance) and as a village taboo post (prohibiting [993] access). The *hae* is regarded as an ancestor, which does not signify, as Williams carefully pointed out, that men believe themselves to be physically descendants [553] of plants, but that the ancestor was a man bearing the name of that plant. Clan and personal names are commonly plant names and often the *hae* of a clan and its name are identical. On the question whether the *hae* is a totem, he remarked that, whatever we call it, 'it will be obvious that it is very much like one.' He noted some forms of religious respect toward *hae*, notably eating and naming taboos.

614 824 To this information we may add that in our experience the term *hae* is frequently used to describe a social group made up of persons sharing a *hae*, and that the group to which it is applied is not the clan (*javo wahai*) but a smaller formation often about the same size as a 'clan segment' or 'lineage'. As such, they are probably the basic larger unit of Orokaiva social structure.

Every individual respects a number of paternal and a number of maternal *hae*. Theoretically, a person passes on his father's but not his mother's *hae* to the next generation so that the *hae* would form an agnatic group. Most individuals have about five *hae* in regular use. I recorded forty-two *hae* names in a population of 135.

There would normally be one *hae* common to a *javo wahai*. Less wide-ranging [582] and more distinctive *hae* would often be of more social importance. Those who were related to the same distinctive *hae* would co-operate in marriage and [611] mortuary payments and maintain a strict exogamy rule. Though they claimed their group to be composed wholly of agnates and children of agnates, there were in fact several cases of uterine transmission for more than one generation, especially where marriages were uxorilocal. Some *hae* became unusually popular, like *topu*, a tree name which became a *hae* after a Sivepe woman died by falling off a *topu* tree. She was given the necronym Topugoru, after which all her lineal descendants adopted *topu* as a *hae*. In other instances again, persons sharing the same *hae* were quite plainly unrelated in a physical sense. In fact the membership of none of the eleven most numerous plant-emblem groups was drawn from a single clan segment or even a single local clan group.

It follows that the social group called *hae* never has a membership identical with that of a lineage, if we use that term in the sense of Crocombe, Hogbin or

5: Schwimmer E-4,5 (1966-1967) 1973
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23
Mountain Orokaiva

Rimoldi. I witnessed marriage and mortuary payments where an entire *hae* (including non-consanguines) were present, but where clansmen of different *hae* had no business to be present.

Orokaiva genealogies hardly ever extended further than two generations beyond the oldest living member of a family. Thus, I was able to draw up a sizeable list of people who lived in Sivepe and other villages around 1915, but could get no genealogical information showing how these people were related to one another. However, informants were able to tell me the *hae* of these ancestors, and these *hae* proved to be the only evidence for statements that A and B 'must have been closely related' or 'cannot have been closely related'. In contrast to the clan and clan segment (which I shall later show to be military and political units – whole or fragmentary), the plant emblem group alone has the nature of a true kinship group. Therefore we should not be surprised that the *hae* occurs prominently in the Orokaiva marriage rules with regard to incest and exogamy.

3. *Williams' Theory of Orokaiva Marriage*

Being a most careful ethnographer, Williams frankly admitted he was unable to understand the Orokaiva rules of exogamy. He quotes three conflicting sets of rules, given to him by informants, and was unable to discern any clear system. According to some informants the clan was the exogamous group. According to others, marriage within the clan was sometimes permissible, but marriage was prohibited between persons sharing a plant emblem. A third rule quoted to Williams was that marriage was prohibited between *du* (i.e. real and classificatory siblings) but permitted and common between cross-cousins. One task of the present essay is to resolve these contradictions.

Williams, furthermore, confessed himself unable to find any positive marriage regulations, i.e. 'any prescribed classes into which a man is obliged to marry' (1930:132). Here he was being too modest: in a subsequent discussion of 'the four forms of marriage' of the Orokaiva, he actually provided the key to the system, though he was unable to carry its analysis as far as he managed to do in some of his later ethnographies, such as those of the Koiari and the *Papuans of the Trans-Fly*.

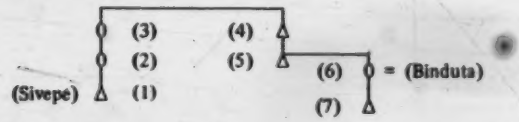
The 'four forms' were: purchase, exchange, elopement, and capture. Marriage by capture used to be very frequent and a regular aftermath of cannibal raids. Williams reports that, under this form of marriage, relations between affines often remained hostile – which is not surprising. In many cases the hostile groups later established peace or at least a truce. One feature of such a truce used to be the payment of bridewealth for captured women. The truce was often negotiated at least partly through the influence of the captive. Though Williams has little information on the compensation paid one gathers that the usual pattern of Orokaiva bridewealth payments was followed: pigs, valuables, bark-cloth, pots, taro, etc. My own data confirm that it was not uncommon for ordinary affinal relations to be established once the captors had paid bridewealth. Children of the marriage would then set up the customary relationship with their mother's brother and even receive permanent rights in hunting lands and the like.

Elopement marriage likewise used to be very frequent. Williams reports that it

601 Within the village, two different principles prevail according to the presence or absence of a generation difference. Where a generation difference exists, opposite sex linkages are always expressed in terms of address. A mother's brother is always called *epe*. The *epe/ahije* bond is based on mutual affection and voluntary support, whereas the *mama/meni* bond is based on strong mutual obligations and an authority/obedience relationship. On the other hand, collaterals of the same local clan group will never call each other *simbo* even though biologically they may be cross-cousins. They use sibling terms and are strictly bound by exogamy rules. In a multi-clan village, collaterals of different clans will sometimes use sibling, sometimes cross-cousin terminology. Here the criterion is whether the persons concerned shared a plant emblem (*hae*).

582 614 824 A rule that was expressed to me often and forcibly was that people should not marry if they share a paternal or maternal *hae*. The relationship of a person with his *hae* is one of complete identification. If a man says that his *hae* is *sasaha* grass, he means that *sasaha* grass is his 'ancestor' and that he himself *is sasaha* grass; i.e. he is completely identified with it. If two people are identified with the same plant in this way they are siblings; they cannot possibly be anything else.

601 602 In general therefore a *simbo* is someone with whom one does not share a *hae*. This rule obtains whether or not *ego* and *alter* live in the same village. A study of actual kin relationships between *simbo* in different villages bore this out. A typical *simbo* relationship would be between *fafasiso* children/*famobrososo*. The *fafasi's hae* would be transmitted to her son, but not to her son's children. The latter would therefore share no *hae* with the grandmother's natal family. Some *simbo* relationships are far more distant than the one quoted here. A typical example is the following:



Here the *simbo* relationship links families of two villages, Sivepe and Binduta. The genealogical pattern may be accounted for by extremely strong attachment between siblings of opposite sex (*du*), and for the tendency for this strong attachment to be reproduced in the next generation. The genealogical connection between *simbo* often passes between two or more of these *du* linkages. A person thus tends to have numerous *simbo* scattered in many villages with some of which has own village may never have intermarried. Even a limited amount of intermarriage between villages may set up a good number of *simbo* links between them, as the links of filiation and siblingship to which the genealogies refer are often merely classificatory. For instance, the individuals numbered (3) and (4) in the above diagram were not true but classificatory siblings.

It will be noticed that the *simbo* category can be defined only by a series of negative rules. It is a set of distant kinsmen which remains when positively

461 recorded every afternoon, when each able-bodied adult was asked
125 how he had distributed his working hours. Of the population of 50, 25 were able-bodied persons over the age of 16.[1] These fall into 2 distinct categories according to age. Seven householders are between the ages of 45 and 65 years, and the other 5 between 25 and 35 years of age. There were no younger men or boys over 15 years in the village. Five of the women were aged 45 or more, 5 were between 25 and 30, and 3 younger women whose husbands were absent in employment, were staying with their kin in the village. One Jegase woman was a total cripple.

857 Nine of the 24 children attend school and 11 are 5 years of age
[871] or under. The rest, 2 boys and 2 girls in the 10-15 age group gave only intermittent assistance in garden work. The boys would often go hunting but were not engaged in productive work as regularly as their elders. The girls had a relatively heavy schedule of domestic chores.

592 The household containing a nuclear family is the basic unit of production and consumption. Members of an expanded family usually make their gardens on adjacent plots and the men usually co-operate in the heavier clearing work. Its members usually travel together [462] to their gardens, but each household then cultivates its garden alone. Apart from the harvesting, which is the task of women, the division of labour between sexes in gardening activities seems to be flexible in each household. Women assist in clearing undergrowth for new gardens and men join them in planting and weeding. It will be seen from Table 4 that men spent nearly as much time as the women in subsistence gardening during our survey. A

342 House-building is carried out generally by the householder and
476 any adult sons, with only occasional assistance from a neighbour
[462] or another kinsman. Wives sometimes help to prepare materials such as sago thatch for the roof.

● [824] Larger work-groups than these are seldom mobilized for subsis-
[461] tence activities.[2] One or 2 men can readily clear enough secondary growth for their own needs and little co-operation is

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[1] Included among these were 1 man whose activity was restricted by tuberculosis, and another very old man. However, both maintained their own gardens.

[2] E. Waddell (personal communication) suggests that assistance with house-building is not 'occasional' but 'considerable' especially with making roofs; he also points out that large work-groups are assembled for harvesting yams (which do not need to be left in the ground for storage). Neither type of co-operation was in evidence during our short survey of work patterns.

A. [See Category 461, p. 28--Analyst]

Appendix D

Plant emblems[1]

613 [824] The members of Bebehupa lineage have the plant-emblem commonly associated with the dispersed clan branch, sesevo grass,[2] as their lineage emblem or erahu.[3] The Sesevopa lineage is a small group closely associated with the Bebehupa people for many years and informants, when asked to explain its name, suggested that it was descended from a Bebehupa woman and that the new lineage referred to its ancestress by the name of the erahu of her group, i.e., as Sesevoja, and themselves became known as Sesevopa. This explanation may reflect the present relative numerical strength of the groups and the process of segmentation may have been quite different in fact.

One unnamed genealogical branch of the Bebehupa lineage has taken the seege bush as an additional erahu. The Berekipa asserted that in practice they as a group would never use sesevo as an emblem, though they accept it as having been the emblem of Jegase men in this neighbourhood. Both the name 'Berekipa' and their own erahu, the simboro plant, were adopted (in circumstances which we could not ascertain) from the so-called 'people' of both the mother of the senior householder, and of the patrilineal ancestor of the other householders. We could not fix any historical details of the connection between this 'group' and either the Bebehupa or the Arehu. The latter also use simboro as an erahu, in addition to their own topu (fig?)-tree emblem.

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1 See Williams 1925; 1930:Ch.8.

2 Confirmed by Williams' data collected in 1923 (W.83). Even then not all members of the clan shared a common erahu (see Crocombe and Hogbin 1963:16; Williams, ibid.).

3 Referred to by Williams as hai or hae at Wasida (1925:408; W.12 ff., passim); kerahu and keratu are the usual variants in other dialects.

pawpaws, bananas, sugar-cane and edible pitpit (Saccharum edule). No rotations are practised, but a garden may be gradually extended so that the period between initial planting and final abandonment may be as much as two years; plants such as banana and pawpaw may survive longer.

Taro is liable to be adversely affected by a lack of soil moisture during the dry season, and at this time people resort to sago or breadfruit[1] and foraging.[2] Yams and Xanthosoma are also more important at this time, since the former can be stored for many months in specially erected yam houses and the latter can remain in the ground for some time without deteriorating.

In Sivepe, animal protein does not form a regular or quantitatively significant part of the diet. The principal source is the domestic pig, and birds and small marsupials which are hunted. In Inonda and other areas more low-lying than Sivepe, rivers are larger and contribute considerable quantities of fish to the diet, while hunting for pigs, wallabies and other marsupials and birds is also more profitable than in the more densely settled areas.

Since about 1890, new subsistence crops, including sweet potato, manioc, Xanthosoma, corn, pawpaw, sweet banana, pumpkin and water melon have been introduced. The Mt Lamington people claim that yams and sago also are very recent introductions into their area. The fruits are consumed mainly as refreshments, but the vegetables have become important in the diet. Sweet potatoes need drier soils than taro and they mature in about three months. They, with yams and Xanthosoma, are often planted in special gardens, known as 'sera',[3] as distinct from the ordinary taro gardens, called 'pure'. The sago palm is still uncommon in the Mt Lamington area and not everyone is skilled in the extraction of the flour. Its leaves have, however, displaced those of the bamboo as the principal roofing material.

(ii) Exchange. The most common transactions are the daily exchanges of food between the households in any Orokaiva settlement. This may be unprepared, cultivated or forest produce distributed on return from the gardens or it may be freshly cooked food given at the time of the evening meal. People also frequently share food, drink or tobacco while working together or on a journey. They do not record these exchanges and each household is assumed to be in a long-term equilibrium with the others.

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[1] Breadfruit is common only in the inland areas.

[2] Particularly for edible leaves and shoots, which are known by the same Orokaiva name (ina) as pitpit.

[3] Such gardens are often only roughly cleared and not weeded, thus reducing labour.

Company already operates a trade store with a liquor licence close to the village.

(e) Other household property

The inventory of property held by the eleven households was divided into 'non-traditional property' and 'property derived from the subsistence sector' (see Tables 4:6 and 4:7). These inventories reveal that, among non-traditional goods, the only items held by nine or more households are axes, bush knives, petos (for cutting grass), blankets, towels, suitcases etc., various outer garments, and mirrors. Clay pots, tapa cloths, combs, lime gourds and string bags are the main items of property derived from the subsistence sector. In addition, all households possess sleeping-mats either made locally from pandanus leaves or bought in a store. Although eight of the households possess hurricane lamps, they seldom have kerosene. Many of the tools were obtained during the second world war or distributed by the Administration after the eruption of Mt Lamington so that the people could re-establish their gardens.

Table 4:7

Sivepe: household property derived from the subsistence sector, November 1964

Household no.	1	2	3	5	6	9	10	11	13	14	15
Tools											
Hunting net	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Wooden trough*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Household											
Clay pot	2	2	-	1	-	3	6	1	2	2	2
Gourd (water)	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-
Personal											
Sleeping-mat	2	3	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	4	2
Tapa cloth	1	4	2	2	1	-	12	5	4	8	1
Comb	2	2	-	1	-	1	2	1	1	2	2
Bamboo pipe	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	1
Lime gourd	2	2	-	2	-	1	2	1	2	3	4
String bag	3	11	3	4	-	4	6	8	10	5	2
Drum	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Di and hambo**	-	20	10	9	-	5	2	6	9	-	18

* For fermenting coffee.

** Di are ornaments made from feathers and beaks of birds; hambo are shell ornaments. Items made from trade store beads or scrap metal, etc. are excluded.

484 produce could be sold directly to buyers at the village.[1] Nothing
[491] in Table 6:11 suggests that this move is related to the changing
[361] location of gardening activities since the percentage time spent on travelling in connection with clearing activities is actually less than that in connection with subsistence gardening.

Table 6:11

Sivepe: time spent on travelling as a percentage of total time spent on grouped activities

	Percentage of total time	Hours per man-week
Clearing	10.5	0.4
Subsistence gardening	18.6	2.5
Other subsistence food production	14.0	0.4
Other subsistence activities	10.1	0.2
Cash cropping	8.3	0.1
Paid work	15.0	0.2
Household	4.4	0.2
Social obligations	36.7	1.2
Sickness	23.9	0.2
External agencies	22.1	1.3
Other	40.7	0.3
Total	18.2	7.4
Corrected total*	15.0	6.1

* Accounting for several activities being undertaken in the course of a single return journey, and for journeys modified by travel in the researcher's vehicle.

361 In the one case of land tenure conversion among the Orokaiva for which information is available, it is interesting to note that the main benefit of conversion, as seen by the participants, lies in the

> consolidation of previously scattered holdings.... Under the traditional system a man may have had rights to several separate pieces of land often considerable distance from each other. As a result much time was spent in walking from

[361] [1] Other reasons given for the move included, firstly, that the new
[824] village would be an amalgamation of four existing ones and this
[825] enlarged size would permit the construction of 'better' houses and facilities, and, secondly, the village itself would be a better place because bananas, coconuts, dogs and pigs (all of which are 'no good') would not be permitted in it.

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Patterns of activity and seasonal influences

An average of 43.5 hours per man-week are spent on all activities.[1] However, the general level of activity and distribution of time varies widely from week to week and also, in some cases, seasonally (see Table 7:3 and Figures 7:2 and 7:3).

(a) The subsistence sector

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[433]

(i) Food production. Subsistence gardening is the most important category of activity, accounting for an average of almost 12 hours per man-week. Over half of this time is devoted to taro cultivation, except during the dry season when planting and, in particular, harvesting of taro are reduced, although maintenance increases. Over the year as a whole, the time spent on taro is almost equally divided between planting, weeding and harvesting. For the other crops, however, little time is spent on weeding and most attention is given to harvesting. This is true of sweet potato and yam, which are usually grown in specialised gardens, as well as of minor crops such as corn, cassava and banana which are usually interplanted with taro. Yams are planted late in the year and harvested in the dry season. Sweet potato is planted both in the dry and early in the wet season, the latter being the main harvesting period, before taro is in full production. Over one-fifth of the 2.1 hours per week spent on minor crops involves coconuts, another fifth bananas and 18 per cent sugar-cane. Eleven per cent is devoted to pitpit but this crop accounts for one-quarter of the total during the wet season. Cultivation of plants that provide edible leaves (ins) accounts for 9 per cent of the time spent on minor crops over the survey, but 29 per cent in the dry season. Corn and pumpkin account for about 5 per cent each.

[824]

Clearing of gardens takes place throughout the year, most in dry spells at the onset of the wet season when newly planted crops will benefit from the rain. In February and March 1964, during the wet season, there was an unusually high rate of clearing after a flood in January destroyed several gardens containing maturing crops. During period II (the dry season), the rate of clearing was comparatively slow, partly because the season was abnormally wet and partly because of the large amount of time invested in fencing, which is necessary particularly at this time since feral pigs from more remote bush areas tend to invade the gardens for food. Clearly, the protection of growing crops has a higher priority than the establishment of new gardens.

[133]

[417]

During the dry season, food-producing activities other than gardening increase in importance, and sago-making is concentrated

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[1] See, however, the adjustment for additional data, pp.136, 138.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 133]

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[462]
[286]
[285]
[824]
[462]

(ii) Other subsistence activities. The other subsistence activities are construction of houses and other buildings and the preparation of tools and equipment such as spears, sleeping-mats and string bags. The latter activity occupies, on average, about 1.5 man-hours per week with no seasonal variation. Over one-third of this time is accounted for by women making string bags. More than one-quarter is spent, mostly by women, collecting and weaving pandanus leaves into mats and over one-tenth in sewing clothes. Men's tasks in this sphere include the making and repair of axe-handles, spears and fishing nets and the weaving of coconut-leaf baskets. House construction is carried out almost entirely by men, except for the preparation of roof-sheets from sago-palm leaves, in which women may assist, and it occupies about 2.0 man-hours a week. During periods I and II, several people were building houses on the new village site. For the most part, such activity was not intensive; some continued to live in the old village and from time to time worked on their new houses, while others built temporary houses on the new site and lived in these while erecting their permanent houses. Not all construction, however, was subsistence oriented. In July and early August the men spent 189.6 hours erecting the copra-drier and in period III the entrepreneur spent 3.2 hours on his new trade store. (Also in period III, 33.1 hours were spent building the chapel, but this was recorded as 'church work' and is included under 'external agencies' rather than 'construction'.) The amount of time shown as spent on construction of houses, garden shelters and the copra-drier is much higher than the time that would be spent on building in most years. This is due to the unusual circumstances during 1964 of the decision to build the copra-drier and the reconstruction of the village; normally, individuals might build new houses only once in five years. Thus, the annual rate of house-construction would be only about one-fifth of the 1964 rate.

[342]

The amount of time expended by individuals in household tasks - cooking, washing and collecting firewood - as shown in Table 7:3 - is understated. Owing to problems of observation during periods I and II when the village was on two sites, cooking was rarely recorded. As a rule, wives prepare two meals a day; breakfast requires 0.8 hours and the evening meal takes 1.5 hours on average. When a midday meal is prepared, the mean time taken is 1.0 hours. Thus, wives are likely to spend at least 2.3 hours a day in cooking, or 16.1 hours a week, and it is clear that cooking is the most time-consuming task for them. When the figures are calculated incorporating this average figure, the mean time spent by individuals on household tasks appears as 10.1 hours rather than 3.8 hours. (This does not include the important contribution made by children, particularly young girls, who, from the age of about five, fetch water and wash pots and, by the time they are about twelve, assist in preparing meals.)

[857]

The exchange of labour services

Table 11:15 presents the detailed composition of labour services given and received by the Inonda people. These services have been discussed in general,[1] particularly with reference to their seasonality. It is worth emphasising here the comparatively small extent of mutual collaboration in work. With some 17,000 working hours available (on the arbitrary basis of 6 man-hours for each of the 2,782 man-days on which exchange data were collected), less than 450 hours were actually spent in assisting others, either in or outside the village, although a few more hours were spent working together in communal tasks such as building the copra drier and chapel.

As was pointed out, 46 per cent of the acquisitions of labour assistance in subsistence tasks is in sago-making. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, it requires several days of intensive and exhausting labour in order to beat the starchy pith from the felled trunk before it spoils in the hot, moist climate and before wild pigs can get at the opened trunk at night. Secondly, a single tree provides enough food (supplemented by garden produce) to support several families for some weeks and the produce of a single tree is distributed by the rightholder(s) particularly to those who assist in its preparation. Due to the exhausting nature of the task, men provide the bulk of the assistance. There is no clear pattern of kinship groups operating: assistance may be requested and received from the immediate family or from among patrilateral, matrilateral and affinal kin. Assistance received in sago-making exceeds disposals by 93.4 hours, reflecting an inflow from other villages. This was received mostly from two young Sewa men, who also contributed over one-third of the total assistance received in house construction.

Tasks involved in the construction of houses account for about 10 per cent of disposals and 15 per cent of acquisitions of all subsistence services. This is undoubtedly higher than it would otherwise be owing to the reconstruction of the village. Even so, the amount of assistance given in the process of re-building is probably understated, as much occurred outside the recording periods. The bulk of the construction services fell into periods I and II and the move was completed by the beginning of period III. One-third of the assistance in construction was in making roof-sheets from sago leaves.

About one-quarter of both acquisitions and disposals of subsistence services is in garden tasks - mainly fencing, clearing and planting taro. In most of these there is an excess of acquisitions,

[1] See pp.235-44.

134 (v) The Avalanche Association consists of riverine deposits of gravel and boulders interbedded with sheets of sand, lying on [191] the floor of the Girua river. It occupies a very small proportion of the Inonda lands, supports a kunai vegetation, and appears to have no potential for either agriculture or forestry.

132 Climate: The climate is hot and moist, except for a hot, relatively dry season which lasts from about July to September. Because of the influence of the Owen Stanley Ranges there is a rapid west-east decline in rainfall over the Orokaiva area. Popondetta has an average annual rainfall of 96 inches so that Inonda, lying 5 miles to the east, probably has a rainfall of 80 to 90 inches. The yearly pattern of rainfall distribution, which is very similar for both Inonda and Popondetta, can be seen from the rainfall recordings for Popondetta given in Appendix C[A](1)

805 The Inonda people refer to the dry season as huvira 824 because the huvira tree (Erythrina indica) flowers at that time. The wet season is divided into a number of periods which are recognized by the ripening of various nuts (especially hauga) and edible pit-pit (ina), and by the flowering of the garepa tree. For instance, the garepa season begins about November or December and lasts for two or three months. These are the wettest months of the year and plant growth is therefore rapid at that time. The pasiro (a variety of pit-pit) ripens about [574] March, which is a time of more moderate rainfall. Food is in abundance at this period, and it is accordingly the most popular season for feasting.

132 The warm moist climate is generally favourable for 241 plant growth, but because many of the soils are coarse in texture and have low water-holding capacity, even short periods of drought may adversely affect the growth of shallow rooting crops (including the staple food, taro). Deep rooting crops such as coffee, cocoa and coconuts are less affected by the dry periods.

(1) This average was computed from recordings taken over the 7 year period 1955-61.

A [See Category 132, p. 100--Analyst]

312 sea breezes, during the dry season (May to August) drive fires across the grasslands against the forest wall.

HOUSING AND VILLAGE LIFE

342 The Yega make three types of buildings each with a separate function; the vernacular names for these buildings are *mando, dobo* and *gaga*. The *mando* is the building where a man and his family normally live. It is a well-built structure about sixteen to twenty feet by twelve to sixteen feet, set on hardwood piles, with the floor about four feet above the ground. The framework is of untrimmed bush poles about four to six inches in diameter, nailed together (the fifty or sixty cents for nails is the only cash expense in building the house). The floor is of split lengths of limbom [824] palm, laid with the convex trunk side uppermost so that there are no splinters. Walls are made of lengths of the two inch thick midrib of sago palm fronds lashed vertically. The lashing usually leaves a space of quarter to half an inch between each pair of strips allowing [824] any cooling breeze to blow through at all times. The roof is thatched with sago-leaf 'tiles'. The house is divided internally into two or three rooms, with a verandah in front. [417] The entrance ladder is frequently the worst constructed part of the house. It is often rickety and dangerous, but even small children and dogs seem to negotiate it without falling. 252 Cooking is usually done in front of the house or, in wet weather, underneath it. Some houses 354 have a mud hearth three feet square and four inches thick, or the top of a forty-four gallon drum covered with two inches of sand, in one of the rooms to serve cooking and heating purposes. Food is cooked in a pot balanced over the fire on three stones or, nowadays, on 352 three empty meat tins. Furniture is simple. There are no tables, chairs, or bedsteads. Sleeping mats are of woven pandanus leaf. There is often a light blanket or two, baskets 353 and bags hang from the ceiling and in every 415 house is a box or suitcase containing the wife's shell jewellery and the husband's ceremonial dancing finery, woven bracelets, feather head dresses, and shell and dog-teeth masks. Another box or suitcase contains the couple's

[P.10-B]

614 not unlikely to meet her request. Her brother's
182 children will fear her constant demands and her threats of sorcery. Her actual power is so great that a religious construct, proclaiming her social distance from the men of the clan, and making her look low and insignificant, may help somewhat to keep the embattled
[842] clan patrimony together. It is therefore tempting to treat Orokaiva parthenogenesis theory as offering further evidence for the tension between patrilateral and matrilateral kin, though this tension could be demonstrated more easily by less esoteric means.

114 The Orokaiva case makes one wonder just
171 what constitutes 'knowledge of physiological paternity'. Leach writes about 'basic facts of physiological paternity' (1967: 41)
842 which anyone but an idiot would know. On the other hand, Spiro speaks of a 'theory' and compares 'physiological paternity' to the 'heliocentric universe' (1968: 244)—the latter was a theory that man did not have until the fifteenth century. Spiro does not quite indicate at what point in time mankind obtained 'knowledge' of the former theory, but he evidently thinks it was well before the birth of Jesus. I am not sure just how Spiro would classify the case of the Orokaiva: are they 'ignorant' of physiological paternity or not? Are they less ignorant than the Trobrianders but more ignorant than the Dobuans (who do not believe in virgin birth at all)? Do not all these groups derive their theory on this subject in precisely the same way, namely in the context of a metaphysical cognitive system? It seems to me that a significant difference between the Melanesians and modern man, if it exists at all, does not lie in the substantive content of their theory of physiological paternity, but in the capacity of modern man to show by empirical evidence that the Trobrianders are wrong, the Dobuans right and the Orokaiva in between. As for the contemporaries of Jesus, they seem to resemble the Melanesians rather than modern man, in that they had no such empirical evidence.

121 I think that in primitive thought we should distinguish between empirical generalisations, which may often imply no more than a rough statistical correlation, and deductive theories
[813] implying causal connexions. It is notorious
[814] that primitive thought will easily move from the former to the latter, as the Orokaiva do, for instance, when they note that *tauga* leaves fall while the main taro crop is coming up and postulate that it is the dropping *tauga* leaves that cause the crop to prosper. There is no reason to believe, however, that the Orokaiva *invariably* make a causal theory out of an empirical correlation and they may even omit to do so where modern thought would applaud such a step. A person may 'know' as

241 Food must be planted at most periods of the year as most
221 Orokaiva crops cannot be stored, but there is a difference according to the purpose of the plantings. Seed planted outside the optimal period can be grown for no purpose except subsistence; plantings made in the optimal period may be in preparation for feasts. Their purpose is not only subsistence but also abundance. The Orokaiva calendar contains a specific feasting season which immediately precedes the "planting" season. Taro planted between July and September reaches maturity between April and June. This is the season of feasts and abundance.

241 A distinction must be made between the ideological and the
221 statistical work calendar. The latter has been set out here from
924 data collected by Waddell (n.d.) in Sivepe and shows that at no period agricultural activities are confined to one particular phase of the work, such as planting or weeding or cultivating or harvesting. There are, however, clear fluctuations showing an emphasis on planting during certain periods and on harvesting, etc. during other periods (Table 5).[A] The ideological calendar, as given to me by informants, both in Sivepe and Hohorita, distinguishes seven phases related to the annual cycle of three forest trees. The calendar noted by Crocombe in Inonda (1963: 6) though more summary, follows the same principle, while differing in some minor details.

1. When the garepa flowers, the taro should be ready to harvest. (The reference is, as in this whole calendar, to the main taro harvest.) But this flowering has several phases: the flowers are first white, later yellow, finally bloodred. When some of them are bloodred, the taro is "really" ready. This is the time when small feasts are given for the owner of the land, but not yet big feasts, for it is only the first of the crop that are really ready.
2. When all the garepa flowers are bloodred, feasting time has really started. This is, in the Mount Lamington area, around Easter time.
3. Another sure sign of the approach of the feasting season is the ripening of the tauga nut (called hauga in the Sangara dialect). While garepa is watched during the time of shortage before the main harvest, tauga is watched during the time of plenty. The nuts are plentiful, delicious and rich in first-class protein.
4. At the end of May, about two months after the beginning of the feasting season, white flowers appear on the barambu tree. This is a sign that the seeds should now quickly be planted in the land. The dry period is beginning; the period when clearing and burning can be done with the least loss of fertility. As these flowers appear, feasts will still be in progress in the villages, but the old men will begin to make moralistic speeches that feasting should now be over and people should return to garden work.
5. Soon after this, perhaps a month later, the leaves of the tauga begin to fall; it is good if by that time a good deal of

A [See Cat. 116, pp. 209-210--Analyst]

planting is already completed for when the old people see the tauga leaves drop over the newly planted gardens they say that the taro will have good leaves; their virtue is said to come from the tauga leaves that drop. The driest part of the year is now at hand and few taro shoots suitable for planting are developing; hence, the best planting time is past.

6. The flowering of the tauga announces the beginning of the rainy season. This falls around the beginning of October.

7. At about Christmas, immature tauga nuts begin to fall from the trees. This is the beginning of the time of shortage and also the occasion of some further garden magic to encourage the swelling of the main taro crop. Some minor feasts occur around this time. People then begin to look forward to the time the garepa will flower again.

We may compare this with Waddell's statistical data, which compares man-weeks spent on all types of activities in Sivepa over the periods 3 February-3 May, 1964; 20 July-6 September, 1964; and 9 November, 1964-3 January, 1965. His figures do not rally particularly closely with the idealogical pattern set out by informants and he explains this by an untypical rainfall pattern in 1964; it was unusually dry.

Rainfall fluctuations have a profound effect on the yield of the main crop taro. Because of the porosity of the ground, very heavy rainfall is needed to ensure a good harvest. Feasts can be held only in years when the rainfall has been good and the harvest accordingly abundant. In other years people are close to starvation level in the months before the harvest. It is then they rely on supplementary crops such as sago.

In recent years, two further calendars have become superimposed upon the traditional one: that of the Christian festivals and that of the European economy, notably monthly coffee sales from June to December and the payment of Local Government Council tax supposedly in September.

Section 3: Topography

In this section I shall specifically describe the differences in topography between Sivepa and Inonda, but this description will illustrate at the same time the fundamental differences between the ecological base of Orokaiva mountain settlements such as are found on the slopes of Mount Lamington and of the plains settlements found North and East of the mountain. I have drawn my data from a regional land and soil survey done by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation in 1954, as well as from remarks of Crocombe and Hogbin (1963) and Rimoldi (1966).

177 based, is alien and seems dubious to Orokaiva. The Europeans claim
245 that a plant needs to be looked after even if it contains no spirit;
249 to the Orokaiva this appears absurd.
[824] Some Orokaiva have been employed by Europeans as carpenters;
these men have certain skills upon which a community draws when large
177 community buildings (for instance, the hospital at Sasembata mission
335 station) need to be constructed. The trained carpenter leads such
enterprises in the role of expert. There was one such man in Sasembata
village; he, like most others of his type, learned his skill in
European employment and not in one of the small adult education
ventures which the administration has sponsored from time to time (the
adult education classes at Ilimo camp were probably the first of this
type).

177 For the rest, the skills acquired by Orokaiva over the last 15
871 years are largely concerned not directly with village development but
rather with an increase of understanding of the world outside. While
before the war, only a small minority had school education, the
Anglican Mission spread its operations to several new stations,
including Sasembata, after the war. After the eruption, the scope of
education was again greatly extended and it could be said that the
eruption marked the beginning of universal school education in the
majority of Orokaiva villages. The Sasembata station began to draw
virtually the entire child population of the surrounding villages,
and most students now follow a five or six year course. While this
development had been planned ever since the war, it may be significant
that regular school attendance of all the villages in the district
was experienced for the first time at Ilimo, where a school was
conducted for the whole evacuee child population, and adult classes
as well. It is the objective of present school programmes, as far
as I can see, to make the population literate and the increase of
[212] literacy is a major aspect of acculturation over the period. Literacy
has certainly progressed to a point where letters written in Orokaiva
to any family in Sivepe can be read and understood with the help of
at least a junior member of the family; and can be replied to. While
177 I could see no evidence that people have acquired mathematical knowledge
802 of any sophistication, I was struck by a strong quantitative orientation.
In the Orokaiva language, there are no numerals higher than 2; hence,
it is the invariable practise to use English numerals when speaking
[192] the Orokaiva language. The numerals are, in fact, among the main
English linguistic features that have been borrowed. They are used
with remarkable frequency; the number of coffee trees, the value in
pounds of trade goods included in a bride price, the calculation of
money prices, even the number of brothers or men who together played
some role in a mythological tale (a distinctly contemporary touch,
this)--all these phenomena show that "numbers" have become an integral
part of Orokaiva culture. The Orokaiva use the English word "number"
177 for a variety of quantitative concepts, including price. Finally, one
829 must regard as an aspect of acculturation, the introduction of many

744 one occasion he did complain about weeds growing in one part of the village; he was also involved in a complaint against two men who were living in condemned houses. The first time I saw him in the village he gave an illustrated lecture on the causes of malaria and methods of malaria control. This was received in much the same spirit as any other metaphysical speculations, which people are not yet ready to share.

There is in progress in the Territory a malaria eradication campaign, for which numerous Papuan technicians have been trained and which involves, i.e., the indoors spraying of villages with DDT. While I did not see any such teams in action, I did notice that anti-malarial injections were standard treatment at the infant health clinic that was held close to Sivepe once a month. Attendance at these clinics was general for all mothers with children of pre-school age. Apart from anti-malarial injections, the nurses offered treatment for sores and other minor ailments; they weighed babies and they took seriously ill young children with them to the hospital. While it was easy to induce mothers to come, it was harder to gain acceptance for Western ideas when these conflicted with Orokaiva ones. This applied especially to child nutrition.

[853] The health authorities had successfully campaigned against the Orokaiva custom of premasticating food given to babies; mothers had stopped doing this, as it was considered uncivilised. On the other hand, nobody obeyed the instruction to mash taro before it was given [824] to babies. The mashing of taro offended the spirit of the taro; it was considered out of the question. An alternative suggestion was to give babies pawpaw, considered by nutritionists to be an excellent [262] baby food. But this food was also avoided by Orokaiva, as it was thought to cause scabies. The result was that Orokaiva babies tended to go through a period of critical malnutrition after weaning and before solid taro can be digested. Our own suggestion to Orokaiva mothers--to go back to premastication--was naturally considered to be no more than a bad joke.

Section 4: Social Services: Education

871 The education system, like the public health system consists
797 of a government sector which is responsible for the bulk of education expenditure and a mission sector which is responsible for the majority of children. In 1965, the mission educated some 65% of the primary school pupils of Papua and over 60% of all pupils. Mission expenditure from its own funds was given in the Territory of Papua Report (1966: 99) as 8.6% of total expenditure on education. In the Northern District, there were four administration primary schools for Papuans (2,403 pupils in 1967) and 54 mission primary schools (8,547 pupils in 1967). The breakdown (see Table 14)[A] shows that schooling generally continues

[A] [See Cat. 116, p. 219--Analyst]

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572 The rejection of both the cooperative and the competitive relationship
602 applies to fictive *simbo* as well as to the genealogical *simbo*. The sharing of a
608 fruit is a ritual that is sometimes performed between a married couple; for example, when the community has decided to hold a feast. It symbolizes that the partners become one. But a twin fruit is not completely one; from
[824] another viewpoint, it consists of two separable halves. Here, it is again deceptive to speak of "fictive" *simbo*. Rather, it is more accurate to say that consanguinity of a certain type is one attribute of the tenure of a relationship while sharing a twin fruit is another equivalent attribute of tenure.

The basic concern of the *simbo* relationship lies in critical and dangerous enterprises, and inasmuch, it is reasonable to want the company of someone who, if necessary, is willing to die with his *simbo*. The relationship resembles marriage in its total interdependence. The Orokaiva system of classification is able to make a clear distinction between this pattern and the *namei* pattern with its far more stable socio-political setting.

572 (d) *Otavo*. Friendships are more numerous now than in the past when travel was more dangerous. The *otavo* relationship, which may exist between cognates and non-cognates alike, applies primarily to a specific activity in
[431] which pairing is required. Its main starting points were, traditionally, trading and feasting. When a man visited a strange village to trade, say, lime, feathers, areca, or a string bag, *and* if buyer and seller were personally attracted to one another, then an enduring *otavo* relationship might develop.

572 Similarly, feasting occasions between villages often result in *otavo* rela-
574 tions. Partnerships have to be arranged for accommodating guests in host households. Sometimes guest and host families are strangers before the feast, but are paired together at a preliminary meeting. Such a relationship might be ephemeral but it is usual to keep to the same partnerships for the return visit. If the partners are sufficiently attracted to each other, an hereditary friendship will result. In the second generation, if not before, the *apa/eambo* terminology will be used.

[535] The term *otavo* is also used to refer to partners who choose one another specifically for dancing. The partners are of the same sex and they tend to stay together for long periods. They may or may not be consanguines.

572 *Otavo* relations are essentially competitive, both partners vying with one another in trade, prowess in war, hospitality, the dance. They also compete with the rest of the group in that some couples enjoy a higher reputation than others. Feasting partners make a great effort to gather many gifts for one another; competitive giving is, for the most part, on the level of households. Outside the activity, the *otavo* have no obligations toward one another.

In modern times, friendships can have many other starting points: work in a plantation, study in a boarding school, and other activities. Traditional connections were often with villages at the outer edge of the area where intra-group morality applied (in the sense of Williams, 1930), and sometimes a little beyond.

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Orokaiva marriage (Schwimmer, 1970) and have shown that sister-exchange marriage, though infrequent, is regarded as the ideal form. Elopement and abduction marriages, once the most frequent, are now frowned upon, though elopement is still prevalent. The patrilateral preference rule (marrying out a girl in her mother's village) is still regularly stated by informants. In my records, which go back to the third generation, I found that 35% of the resident married women had been married out by that rule for the whole three generations, i.e., they had been exchanged for their mothers and their mothers for their grandmothers.

In the study [2] that follows, I shall first present data concerning the coconut and areca, then about the taro. I shall follow this presentation with a brief discussion about the relation between the levels of myth and ritual.

1. COCONUT AND ARECA

A salient characteristic of the ethnobotany of the Orokaiva is the classification of plants as masculine and feminine. Certain important cultivars are grouped together as opposite-sex couples and grown in close association with one another. Claims are made that such plants will not prosper unless they are planted close together and that, in their wild state, they are also found together.

The symbolic association of these pairs of plants may be based on a number of shared characteristics: the similar outward appearance of the fruit, a coincidence in the time of fruiting, and similarities in culinary use, taste, and supposed physiological effects of the fruit when eaten. Sometimes the pairs of plants are linked in ritual use and in a common myth.

Coconut and areca are planted together in villages as well as gardens. Both nuts are eaten raw between meals; both grow on palms; both are offered to visitors—the coconut as refreshment immediately upon arrival and the areca (along with *hingi* pepper and lime) for chewing during the conversation. At mortuary feasts coconut and areca are the principal gifts, offered in large quantities to guests from villages who helped to bury

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the dead person. At ordinary harvest feasts and bride-wealth payments they are seen on display platforms along with taro and other vegetables. They are then subsidiary to taro and pigs, which are the main food gifts, but at mortuary feasts vast quantities are given, saved from the dead man's palms, which are made taboo until this feast. Dry coconut and areca are strewn on graves by affines of the deceased.

The distinctive features perceived by Orokaiva in each species should also be summarized. Coconut is believed to be a valuable adjunct to the diet of children and dogs (also chickens). In Orokaiva myths, its miraculous effect on children and dogs is often described. To the scientific observer this effect is natural enough as coconut is an important source of first-class protein for both children and dogs, who otherwise do not get much first-class protein. Coconut oil is used as a cosmetic for hair and body not only to enhance beauty but also for its magical efficacy, for the purification of man-slayers (Williams, 1930: 175, 207), and for women who are being initiated or who welcome visitors at dances. In all such cases it is the task of a male to pour the coconut milk over the persons whose magical protection is intended.

Areca, a mildly hallucinogenic fruit, is chewed by women as much as by men. When friends are sitting together, it is shared in much the same way as beer among white Australians. People offer nuts to each other but expect to come out approximately even. Visitors from other villages expect to be offered areca by their hosts. Its main physiological effect is to create a dreamy amiability and to break down hostility that might otherwise exist. Its magical uses, mostly in association with some medicine of more specific purpose, are too many to enumerate. A girl carries a bunch of areca at the ceremony which ends her seclusion after first menstruation. She normally offers it to her man at lovers' meetings.

Although I have a number of coconut and areca myths on record, I shall discuss here only one, the fullest one, which illustrates my argument most clearly. A beautiful girl, noted for her remarkable breasts, had the misfortune of killing all the young men with whom she slept. Her breasts pricked and killed them.

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She warned them to sleep against her back but they would never follow this advice. The girl's brother became concerned and told her he would personally choose her next sleeping partner. He chose his own *dambo,* i.e., his wife's brother. He told his *dambo:* "Because mistakes were made other bachelors have died, but my *dambo,* my true *dambo,* she is going to sleep, she is going to bed. Therefore see that all is properly prepared and that the bed is properly made for sleeping." But this handsome young man also was pierced by the girl's breasts and killed. The brother buried his brother-in-law, then killed his sister and buried her beside the other grave.

After a mourning period the brother took his wife to the two graves. They found a coco palm in full bearing above the sister's grave. An areca palm had grown over the grave of the young man. Heaps of dry nuts were lying on the ground. That is how these two palms originated. He said:

> Wife, as we come close, we see coconut and areca growing where only grass grew before. Dry coconuts have fallen and are rotting away; dry areca nuts are growing shoots. It can be seen from my sister's grave that she was a creature of misfortune [*embavo*] and that the bachelors' deaths were her doing.
>
> The coconuts growing in the grave must stay there and the areca growing on *dambo*'s grave must likewise stay. See to it.

The hero opens a dry coconut, then a budding coconut. Though he declares that he will die if he eats these nuts, his wife desires them; they are so delicious. He feeds them to the dog, expecting it to die, but it does not. He then declares:

> Wife, coco palms are growing in my sister's grave, but the flower clusters on the stem have pointed sheaths [*peperuma*] which puncture the skin and make men die. It is always said that people die when that happens. The mass of sheaths will strike men with the sleep of death; when the sheaths have struck, men will die utterly. That was the cause of the girl's death. When I came here and saw coconut growing out of her grave and dry nuts fallen on the ground, I

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began to understand that my sister had killed the men I had carried to their graves and buried. . . .

When a man has collected areca, he gives it back to a girl. When that girl has helped to fetch coconut, she in turn gives it to the man. It therefore belongs to the man. This being so, the coconut is a man but the areca a girl: for this reason, girls give areca.

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On the level of social structure, this myth is concerned with the Orokaiva institution of sister-exchange marriage. Though such arrangements were not very frequent among the Orokaiva (I would estimate about 5% of all marriages), sister-exchange marriages are strongly idealized as I have shown elsewhere (Schwimmer, 1970). In this myth a man arranges such an exchange marriage for his sister because he evidently believes it provides more protection against magical dangers than any other. When this ends in disaster, the brother feels entitled to assume there is no bachelor with whom his sister can safely sleep, as he explains in a passage not quoted here. He therefore kills her, but right through the story his *dambo* (wife's brother) continues to be regarded as husband of his sister. It is for him, rather than for any other man she has slept with and killed, that she grows coconuts. In fact it is the bond of love between the dead couple which gives the whole tale its meaning. The closeness of this bond is not explained psychologically by personal sentiments existing between the lovers, but structurally, by sister-exchange marriage.

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On the level of social exchange the myth depends largely on rather complex and condensed ideological statements made by the hero. I have translated the crucial passages verbatim. In the full text, the brother comes back four or five times to the miracle that chiefly concerns him: the symbiosis of coconut and areca, dropping their fruits side by side and thus (as he implies rather than states) fertilizing one another. Taking this symbiosis as a fact of nature, the hero uses it to explain several other mysterious facts: (*a*) why all the bachelors died; (*b*) the ritual uses of coconut and areca; (*c*) why the Orokaiva consider the coconut masculine, areca feminine. To answer the first question, he refers to an easily verified fact: the *peperuma* of the coconut

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do look like a girl's breasts; they are very dangerous if one falls upon them with any force. His sister was clearly an *embavo*, a coconut spirit. In this way the deaths are, to Orokaiva thought, adequately accounted for.

The hero explains two types of ritual uses of coconut and areca, namely, those related to mortuary feasts and those where the sex of the recipient of the nuts is opposite to that of the donor. The instruction that nobody should eat the nuts lying under the trees, on pain of death, constitutes a mythological charter for the taboo placed upon the coco palms and areca palms owned by a person recently dead. An informant explained a further implication to me, which is not very clear from the version I quoted, namely, that it is customary to place coconuts and areca nuts upon the grave of a dead affine. Thus it was the duty of the hero to place coconuts and areca nuts upon the grave of his brother-in-law; and the duty of his wife to do the same for the grave of her sister-in-law. In order to clarify these points, the myth tells of the wife's desire to eat the nuts and the hero's refusal to let her have them.

In a somewhat elliptic manner, the hero lists or implies three sets of rules concerning gifts of coconut and areca, where the sex of the recipient of the nuts is opposite to that of the donor. The sets are:

Areca	*Coconut*
1a. The man fetches the nuts from the tree.	1b. The woman *helps to fetch* the nuts from the tree.
2a. The man gives the nuts to the woman.	2b. The woman cooks the nuts for the man.
3a. The girl offers nuts to her lover and carries an offering of nuts at initiation.	3b. At a girl's initiation, a man prepares coconut oil, which is used as a ritual cosmetic.

The first opposition is made quite explicit in the hero's speech, but is not free from casuistry. Men usually fetch not only areca but also coconuts from the high palms on which they

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grow. The woman may help by collecting coconuts once they have dropped on the ground and by carrying them home. Very often, however, the coconuts are carried by men, who tie two nuts to a stalk, thus creating a huge effigy of a phallus. The feeble empirical basis of this opposition only serves to emphasize that we are here being taught an ideology which requires the opposition.

The hero's second opposition centers on the culinary use made of the nuts. Areca has no place in the kitchen, in opposition to coconut. The fact that coconut is also often eaten raw would weaken the opposition but is suppressed. The third opposition is in fact the strongest, but it is stated in a rather elliptical manner. We are told that in ritual girls give areca to men, but the opposite statement is omitted, viz., that in the same initiatory context *men* (but never women) pour coconut oil over girls.

In the narrator's mind all these oppositions are probably subordinate to a philosophical question: why the Orokaiva consider coconut masculine, areca feminine. Numerous informants have confirmed this classification in conversations with me. In this story, however, it is not presented as a "fact," but it is deduced in a logical manner. The words used make it clear that we have to do with a logical deduction:

> *Ainge* embo amina ainge ena. Embo amina *ainge eto*, erevi u ra embo erevi u ra; te sa erevi meni kakara ra;—*ainge eto* ikena.

This passage, translated above, contains the notion of logical entailment three times: *because* the girl gives coconut to the man, it *therefore* belongs to the man; *because* coconut belongs to a man, *therefore* coconut is masculine; *because* areca is a girl, girls give areca. The problem, for those who do not know Orokaiva culture, is that every one of the conclusions appears to lack logical force. Furthermore, it will be noticed that, from a formal viewpoint, the narrator's argument proceeds quite differently for men and for girls. This difference also needs explanation.

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When I heard this tale, I could not help arguing with my informant. I said: If the coconut grew out of the girl's grave and she later gave the coconut to the man, wouldn't it follow then that the coconut is feminine? My informant received this argument with a tinge of pity. It proved to him, if any proof were needed, that white men are indeed quite incapable of abstract reasoning. It took him some time to understand what problem I could possibly be having. Finally he said: "The girl intended these coconuts as gifts for a man; therefore, they must be masculine." At that point I remembered I had heard this argument somewhere before, in Mr. Lévi-Strauss' introduction to Marcel Mauss, *Sociologie et anthropologie* (1950). If we produce something that is *intended to be given away*, it was called into being by a prior relationship between donor and recipient, and could not be utilized by the former without losing its predetermined nature.

We find the same line of thought elsewhere in Orokaiva culture: pigs cannot be eaten by those who reared them because they are, from the beginning, set apart as gift objects. The most striking and intimate instance may be found in a myth of a woman who has a detachable vagina. She pretends to her husband that she has lost it: "I dropped your vagina in the water." The husband looks for it between the stones of the river: "I am looking for my vagina."

In all these cases the gift object partakes of the nature of the recipient. However, the narrator appears to follow a quite different line of reasoning when he says: "Because areca is a girl, girls give areca." There is an apparent contradiction here, which is resolved only when we recognize that two different types of gift must be distinguished—perhaps we can call them "metaphoric" and "metonymic." If we call a coconut a man or a man a coconut, we are using a metaphor. Furthermore, if we proceed to call an areca a girl, we are setting up a metaphoric opposition (coconut/areca) which corresponds to the real opposition (man/woman). When Mr. Sperber speaks of "code structures" (1968:211), he is principally referring to classificatory systems built up from such metaphoric oppositions. When

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I use the term "metaphoric gift," I mean a gift about which we are told in a story, the message of the story being that gift and the recipient are metaphorically identical. The point of the story is to establish the symbiosis of man and woman by the use of the metaphor. An example of such a story would be the gift of sacred emblems to the infant Dionysus in Orphic myth. This story tells us how Dionysus received certain gifts (cone, bull-roarer, golden apples, mirror, knuckle-bone, tuft of wool) which defined his nature. In the same way, in Orokaiva myth men are given a coconut nature and women, an areca nature.

Orokaiva informants offer what they regard as empirical evidence for this. Coconut may be recognized as a man because the palm germinates slowly and the fruit comes to maturity slowly ("it comes slowly"). Likewise, so I was told, the male is slow to be sexually aroused and to desire women. Areca may be recognized as a girl because it germinates and comes to maturity quickly—the fruit matures faster than the coconut. Likewise, woman is quick to be sexually aroused and to feel desire for a man. In this analogy, the botanical facts are evident but the psychological generalizations describe no more, perhaps, than Orokaiva role expectations.

While metaphoric gifts do no more than mythically explain a code structure, metonymic gifts are those which mediate social relations between partners whose nature was established prior to the gift and whose nature is not changed essentially by the gift. In such a case it may be said that the donor "gives part of himself." Thus a girl, whose nature is that of areca, will give areca, and a man, whose nature is coconut, will give coconut. The metonymic gift is the basis of network structures. If the two partners in social exchange are of a different nature (in respect of the transaction in question), then each will use his own distinctive object of mediation as gift to the other. Girls give areca to men, but men give coconut to girls. (I am speaking now of a ritual, not an everyday context.) The simplest kind of network structure may therefore be represented by the following model:

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Object of
mediation (1)

Partner (1) Object of exchange (1) Object of exchange (2) Partner (2)

Object of
mediation (2)

In the case under consideration, the two partners are man and woman; the objects of social exchange are male sexuality and female sexuality; and the objects of mediation are coconut and areca. The model shows the basic difference between code structures and network structures. The former consist of logically related binary oppositions, whereas in the latter the two partners are engaged in the somewhat magical pursuit of setting up, maintaining, or restoring social relations with one another. Whereas code structures have to do with symbolic thought, network structures have to do with action. There are a great many types of social relationships which are mediated by coconut and areca. By no means all of these are cross-sexual or between affines. Many are extremely casual. Except in a ritual context, the relationship between these gifts and male or female sexuality is extremely attenuated.

No trace of hierarchy can be found on the level of code structure. The relationship between coconut and areca is one of plant symbiosis. The one plant cannot prosper without the other. This makes each of them infinitely dependent on the other, so that neither can be superior to the other. It should be noted that the symbiosis expressed in the myth and in Orokaiva belief is not an empirical fact. The two plants are not, by strict botanical criteria, interdependent parts of the ecosystem. The man/woman opposition is real; the coconut/areca opposition is metaphorical and the symbiosis is imaginary. When the narrator lists rules concerning coconut and areca gifts, the oppositions between sex roles are feeble indeed. The narrator

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proceeds as though he wished to prove at all costs the absolute interdependence of husband and wife, the absolute necessity of their symbiosis. So important is this ideological notion of symbiosis that the culture has set up numerous imaginary plant symbioses to emphasize it. There is no time here to analyze several other recorded myths which carry the same message.

We may also say that hierarchy is absent on the level of network structure (in the sense of Sperber, 1968) as there is no problem of allocation and no competitive aspect in obligations relating to the giving of coconut and areca. With the exception of mortuary feasts, the nuts are given away in small quantities, as tokens which are part of ordinary social exchange. If a visitor is given no coconut on his arrival in a village, this is rarely because of any absence of coconuts, but mostly because one does not want the visitor to stay, and this unwillingness has nothing to do with the coconut transaction. If there are really no coconuts, this does not affect the relationship. The same applies to areca.

The manner in which coconut and areca are given to guests confirms and expresses the existing social stratification. The most important guest receives the first coconut. He is also likely to receive a large gift of areca, which he then distributes to his followers. Though Orokaiva society is much less stratified than many other New Guinea societies that have been reported, men differ in influence and only the most influential can hold feasts. The position of the "bigger men," as one may call them, is not validated by any ideology or formally designated position, hereditary or otherwise, as is the case in Polynesia.

2. TARO

The foregoing discussion of coconut and areca has been presented because it provides a particularly clear illustration of the nature of code structures and network structures. I would not, however, classify either the code or the networks arising out of coconut and areca exchanges as hierarchical. If we compare these fruits with taro, the principal staple of the Orokaiva,

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we find that taro resembles them in that taro gifts are ritual statements by which attitudes toward social relations are communicated. We may say, to use Mr. Sperber's terminology again, that in this respect they form a code structure. It will be shown that this code structure is again nonhierarchical, thus resembling coconut and areca. On the other hand, a statistical study of the behavior of exchange partners shows that, on the level of exchange structure, there are rules by which a hierarchy is unconsciously generated between households and between villages. A system which combines a hierarchical network with a nonhierarchical code might be described, in my terms, as political, though incompletely so.

Most taro produced by the Orokaiva (over 90% in the villages surveyed) is consumed directly by the producing household. Nonetheless taro is the most ubiquitous of all Orokaiva objects of exchange; most households give some of it away every day. It is also part of the conventional set of gifts that change hands on virtually every ceremonial occasion. The main purpose of such gifts is usually the mediating of social relations rather than the setting up of a claim for a specific return gift. The ritual statements that may be made by means of taro gifts fall into two categories: raw taro, ritually given by men, tends to be part of a ceremony aimed at the establishment or restoration of social relations, whereas gifts of cooked taro, normally made by women, are part of the process of maintaining social relations of a certain degree of intimacy.

I shall base the following abbreviated analysis of taro symbolism on one myth. Of the several versions collected, I shall quote the fullest one, indicating variants where relevant. The name of the principal hero is usually given as Totoima, though this name does not appear in the version quoted. Williams has some references to the Totoima myth (see 1930:155, 158–159, 276), but these are not very illuminating. The following version was obtained from Samuel Jovareka, born at Kiorota and now a resident of Sivepe village:

> A husband slept with his wife. She became pregnant and gave birth to a small child. The husband came and asked:

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"Woman, where does the boy come from?" "I have just given birth to him." "Then he is mine to eat. Strike and sever him; when he is dead cut him up and cook him for me to eat."

The woman was very sad because she had to kill and cook her child. They slept together again and this time the woman gave birth to a female child, which was treated in the same manner. Male twin children followed next. But when the man came to fetch these, he could not find them. The mother had taken them to a hiding place, where she covered them with a heap of weeds [*bivese*] by the root of a tree.

On some pretext, the mother returned to the field, nursed the children and covered them over again. When she came home, the husband said: "Wife, what did you do with my child that was in your belly?" "Husband, I threw my child into the water because it was bad," she replied. "I am going to collect cabbage."

Having said this, she climbed a cabbage tree. As she looked down and saw the place where she had put her children, she began to weep. When she returned to the ground, her husband said, "Wife, why did I see you cry when you climbed to collect cabbage?" "When I went to collect the cabbage, the sap squirted into my eyes and I rubbed them," she said. "You are lying," he said.

When the children were fully grown, she took them to the mountain far away. She told them their history; "therefore, I must leave you behind and you must stay," she said. When she joined her husband again, he asked: "Why did you stay away so long?" "As soon as I had done my work and planted my seed [*bere kovitie*], I started on my way home," she said. "Woman, you are telling lies," he replied. When the man understood what his wife had been saying, he went away.

The two children, all by themselves, made a garden, ate their food and kept alive. The man went to where the two children were staying. The female sibling had gone to collect taro while the male sibling was lying asleep with his chest turned upwards in the shelter. It was there that the man found him, recognized him at once as his child and cut out his heart and intestines. He ate these, leaving the rest of the body behind for the next day.

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The story tells in more detail than is relevant here how the sister learned what had happened, how a magician from the neighboring mountain district of Managalase brought the brother back to life by giving him the heart and intestines of a wallaby, how this man married his sister and how the young man killed his father when the latter returned to complete his meal. He cut the father into many pieces, which were shared out among men whose descendants became the various language groups of the northern district, and multiplied exceedingly.

The informant who told me the myth suggested that its subject was the origin of taro cultivation. The whole text is deliberately ambiguous. When we are told of the woman giving birth to a child, we must think simultaneously of her harvesting a taro—and we must remember that among the Orokaiva only women are considered *capable* of harvesting taro. When the woman is told to cut the child's head off, the narrator is thinking simultaneously of harvested taro, which is considered to be still alive until the top is severed from the rhizome. Again, the woman's method of concealing her children is modeled on the treatment given to taro shoots (*bere*) when they are planted. The word *bivese*, in particular, denoting the heap of weeds with which the children are covered, is a gardening term.

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The apparent lies used by the woman to hide her activities from her husband are truths if her statements are taken symbolically. For instance, the reference to "throwing the child into the water" calls to mind that the origin of taro in many myths is linked to the water and that the rainy season is metaphorically linked to the fostering of a child in the womb.

The true nature of Totoima, though familiar to every Orokaiva, is not explicitly set out in the myth presented here. In other tales he has tusks which he wears when he kills people, but which he lays aside when he goes to sleep. He is killed by his son after his tusks have been removed from his bed. I shall return to this theme in a later section of this essay. Meanwhile, we note that in attacking his son, lying in the *gaga*, Totoima behaves in the manner of a wild pig while his son behaves like harvested taro. Totoima has partly a pig nature, partly a human nature, and these aspects are only partly differentiated. His son,

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by killing him, sets up a boundary between pig nature and human nature which thenceforth remains rigidly fixed. What concerns me is the link, in the present myth, between this theme and the origin of taro cultivation. 824 539

The myth appears to be built up out of three sets of oppositions. One is the dual nature of Totoima, already discussed. The second is the dual nature of his wife, or of woman, who nurtures Totoima and also conspires to kill him. This second aspect is also found in numerous myths concerning Totoima. In the present version not only the wife but also the daughter is involved in conspiracy. The taro are her children, and it is right that Totoima should eat them. She feeds them to him. However, she places restrictions on Totoima's appetite. This is an essential part of any myth concerning the domestication of plants. The *bere* of the taro, the cuttings, or more strictly, the corm-bearing bases of the petioles of the taro plants, must be preserved for the next harvest. It is the woman's duty to withhold these from her husband and to manage the taro field so that the supply of *bere* is always assured from year to year. It is for her to see that her husband behaves like a "domesticated" human being. This is notoriously difficult for the male even today. In that sense, Totoima may be said to be reborn with every generation. Woman's two aspects—nurture and domestication—are crucial in the ritual statements that are made through gifts of taro.

The third opposition, to which I have just referred, is between the taro garden—the patch of land that is cultivated and domesticated—and the bush where the wild pigs, the ghosts, and the enemies are. This is at the same time, essentially, the opposition between the male and female spheres of life. Man, the hunter and fighter, is primarily concerned with the world outside the garden. To woman, this is an excessively dangerous world, and the sphere of the village and garden must constantly be protected from its influence. The symbiosis between man and woman is based upon gifts of products obtained by each sex in one sphere of life and indispensable in the other. Thus the garden products are indispensable to the life of the male. Conversely, the meat killed by the male is indispensable to the

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female. I have collected a number of myths concerning the origin of marriage, where that institution is created by the male hero's act of bringing meat home for sharing with his wife instead of eating it in the bush, as was customary before marriage existed. It is also the male on whom the female depends for clearing the ground and making a garden, and for clearing a village site and building houses.

If female nature, in its pure state, is found in the taro garden and male nature, in its pure state, is found in the jungle, then it follows that human beings, being born of a man and a woman, have a mixed nature. One may say of Totoima that in him this dual nature is imperfectly developed; that he behaves toward taro in the manner of a cannibal. Similarly it is at first imperfectly developed in his son, who does not hunt and has purely a taro nature. He is therefore easily defeated by Totoima. It is only when the man from Managalase has replaced the son's taro innards with animal entrails that the latter has the power to defeat his father. He is then superior to his father because he has a fully human nature which is symbolized by his manner of killing, namely, with a club rather than the teeth (as Totoima did).

The second type of ritual statement is made by men giving raw taro, complete with tops, to other men, usually in the context of a feast. Although such gifts are confined to varieties classified as "feasting taro" (*pondo ba*), most tubers actually grown in the villages I studied fall in this category. This second type of ritual statement can be understood only once we have explained why in most Orokaiva taro myths there is not a single originating hero, but two, namely, a pair of siblings of opposite sex. In the myths which have a single hero, that hero is invariably a woman. In chants sung in homage to the taro divinity, this deity is always called Bako Jape (grandmother taro); taro, for the Orokaiva, is symbolically equal to "our mother," as they often say. The presence of the male sibling therefore certainly needs explanation.

To this puzzle I shall add another, which is posed by a detail of the text of the myth as quoted here. It will be noted that in the beginning of the myth the twins born to the taro

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woman are both male whereas at the end they are described as siblings of different sex. Did the informant err in the opening sentences? It is possible but, in the case of Samuel Jovareka, not at all likely. This second puzzle seems a very trivial one, but we shall find that, if we know why the sex of the taro in the narrative changed, we shall also know why there are two taro ancestors in the myth, and why these are siblings of opposite sex.

The myth takes us through *two* complete taro cultivation cycles, not just one. We are told of the planting of taro in the water, covered over with weeds to protect them from the sun, the gradual growth of the plants under the woman's care, the shifting of *bere* (developed in the taro) to a *new* garden "established at some distance from the old one, as is customary," and finally the growing of these *bere* to maturity. I was given no explanation of this duplication, but would ascribe it to the punctiliousness with which the Orokaiva regard the domestication process, a characteristic which I shall discuss in more detail in connection with pigs. The myth starts with the finding of wild taro and the transplanting of that taro to a clearing. But it is only the *bere* that have been *grown* in that clearing that can be described as truly domesticated taro.

The effect of this domestication process on the disposal of taro was that in the beginning, when the woman simply found taro and then cooked it, *all* taro harvested by the woman was a gift to the man. Therefore, if we follow the same kind of reasoning as we learned from the coconut and areca myth, all taro harvested by the woman was of male gender. We may say equally well that Totoima ate all taro whether it was male (i.e., intended for him) or female (i.e., not intended for him under conditions of domestication). At the end of the myth, however, a differentiation has been effected between the male taro, which lies in the shelter ready for consumption, and the female taro, which has gone elsewhere, presumably to a new garden. The taro is female at all stages of its development but male at the point where it becomes available for giving away.

There are now two ways in which this product may be disposed of. It may be given away by a woman in cooked form or

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it may be given away, complete with tops, by a man to other men. We here see the same contrast which we met before between a metaphoric and a metonymic gift. The feminine gift, in this case, is metaphoric: she gives her own essence, which is taro, to the man. In return she receives meat, the man's essence; but we come to this later. The male gift of taro, raw and complete, is metonymic: he gives some part of his taro nature, conferred upon him by woman, to another man with whom he desires to establish or restore social relations.

The significance of taro, as part of the nature of the human male, is clarified in the myth by the opposition between the male twin and the man from Managalase. The Managalase is a neighboring mountain district where the main crop is yam, not taro, but where a variety of taro (called *pijama*) is also grown. It is not, however, grown in gardens but in small bush clearings. The Managalase magician is therefore in an intermediate position between Totoima and his son: unlike Totoima, he recognizes the technology of domestication of taro, but he recognizes it inadequately, being mainly a hunter. Such, at least, is the view expressed in Orokaiva stories about the Managalase.

Taro, to the Orokaiva, is symbolic of strength; it is preferred to other staples because it builds stronger men, so it is believed. Taro is, moreover, the principal bulk gift displayed at feasts. Certainly, pigs are always given away at feasts, but in small quantities, and the size of the feasts is not principally measured by the amount of pig meat given away. It is by the quantity of taro that changes hands that the size of an Orokaiva feast is measured. A pole is placed in the center of the heap and measured. When taro is received at a return feast, the recipients take it back to their own village and lay it against the same pole. If the quantity is smaller, the other side has lost the competition. The strength of a village is measured by the amount of taro it can produce. The strength of a fighter or hunter is derived not so much from the amount of game he has previously killed; it is derived from the taro he has eaten. It is in this sense that taro, when consumed by man, is stronger than pig, though in the absence of this metabolism, pigs are stronger than taro.

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Finally, it is significant that in the fighting between Orokaiva and Managalase, the former were most often the aggressors and the latter were the victims of cannibal raids, of inroads on their hunting territory, and so forth. Thus the Orokaiva regard themselves as stronger than the Managalase (certainly they are more numerous, as their fertile land can support a denser population) and the Orokaiva explain their greater strength by the abundance of their taro supplies.

While it is clear enough that there are no hierarchical implications in female taro gifts (they symbolize the symbiosis between the sexes), a kind of hierarchical ordering is apparent with regard to male taro gifts, inasmuch as the myth is concerned with a conflict between adjacent generations, where the father seeks to kill and is killed by the son.

It seems to me, however, that hierarchical ordering of this kind does not fall within Mr. Dumont's definition (1966:92), namely, that hierarchy is "un principe de gradation des éléments d'un ensemble par référence à l'ensemble."[2] This seems to exclude hierarchical ordering within a family, or corporate group, on the mere basis of age and generation. It does not altogether exclude the kind of stratification suggested in the myth as between hunters and gatherers (lowest tier), hunters and bush-clearing cultivators (middle tier), and garden cultivators (highest tier). Within the framework of Orokaiva society this is not a hierarchical relation between population groups but an evolutionary sequence with little reference to actual social relations. When the Orokaiva postulate some superiority over Managalase, this is no more than tribal rhetoric on their part. Nonetheless, on the level of rhetoric, we find hierarchical ordering of tribes according to their cultivation practices.

Taro, moreover, gives rise to hierarchy on the level of network structures. Taro has a special position in the Orokaiva exchange system in that it symbolizes commensality. Though, in terms of the myth, it is only a gift made by a woman to her husband, in practice cooked taro is given also to those households which a woman wishes to honor with a kind of pseudo-commensality. The taro is taken to the home of the recipient,

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either by the housewife who has cooked it or by one of her children. The quantity is usually about two kilograms, which constitutes a very hearty meal for one person. Thus taro gifts become, for the anthropologist, an almost infallible index of intimacy: once two persons have established a certain degree of intimacy, taro exchanges invariably follow. The same cannot be said for any other object of mediation, not even pig meat (which is exchanged only in specific circumstances) or coconut and areca (which may be given to very casual acquaintances). The exchange network of cooked taro therefore coincides with the network of intimate association.

I have made a somewhat detailed, statistically oriented study of taro-exchange networks which, for lack of time, cannot be reported here. During twenty-eight days, between 31 January and 10 March 1967, I recorded taro gifts made by all households of Sivepe village. The number of gifts made and received averaged 2.5 daily per household, ranging from a minimum average of 1.3 to a maximum average of 4.1. At the same time notes were kept of social relations between the households involved: work relations, common journeys, different types of visits between households, conversational groups in various parts of the village. The social interaction records were compared with statistics showing the households to which each household had given taro during the period, and the frequency of those gifts. There was a close correspondence between frequency of taro gifts and intimacy of social relations. There were also a set of types of formal occasions when such gifts were thought especially appropriate, e.g., when the recipient household was entertaining outsiders, had a new baby, a death, had performed some specific service; or if the recipient was old, incapacitated, ill. Nobody made taro gifts to everyone in the village: in the twenty-eight days for which I kept tally, the number of such partnerships varied from three to fourteen out of twenty-two households surveyed, with an average of 8.5.

The taro-exchange partners were always the persons on whom one was most dependent in sentiment, in economic tasks, in political support. They would tend to take one's side in intravillage disputes. Taro gifts thus were a ritual statement in

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which one household would express its desire for close association with another. I inquired to what extent the gifts were balanced. I found, as Sahlins already suggested in 1965, that little importance is attached to precise balance in food gifts. In more than half the households the total imbalance exceeded the proportion 60:40. On the other hand, I also found that extreme imbalance usually has a special explanation, often old age, or special burdens which might be only temporary. Informants, when asked, deny there is any obligation to make return gifts. Yet the statistics show a strong tendency toward the sending of taro gifts on the same day or the day after one has received them. The recipient will explain that he is under no obligation but likes to reciprocate.

Certainly this attitude is in accordance with the explanation I have given of this custom. The return gift should not be considered principally as an obligation but as a ritual statement reciprocating the desire to maintain a close association. Here the question of the frequency of the gifts is closely connected with the question of how intimate each side wants the association to be. An increase in the frequency of the gifts means a desire for a more intimate association. If the recipient wishes to keep the association within certain limits, he may be slow in making a return gift. Unbalanced exchange occurred, for instance, with migrants from a neighboring village (Garombi) who gave more than they received and seemed to be constantly trying to build up new alliances. They were welcomed more warmly by some old residents than by others. If recipients, though fully capable of making equally frequent return gifts, reciprocate halfheartedly, the donor household tends to reduce the gifts to the level acceptable to its partner.

There are, therefore, limits which households set for the extensiveness of their taro-exchange network. These limits are determined less by economic considerations than by sociopolitical ones. There is a limit to the number of intimate social relationships that any individual can maintain. A choice exists, within any culture, between allocating relatively little time to a relatively large number of associates or maintaining a small number of privileged associates with whom contact is very fre-

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quent indeed, while spending relatively less time with the rest. Inevitably a gradation of associations thus develops. This gradation of associations, among the Orokaiva, is expressed by the ritual statement of taro gifts, made with varying frequency. We thus find that the first (i.e., most frequent) partner is involved in an average of 38% of all taro transactions, the second partner in 24%, the third partner in 12%. The first and second partners are in a clearly privileged position.

A second way of describing the pattern of intimacy would be to assume that there is some community norm whereby a certain degree of intimacy is expressed by a specific frequency of gifts. My impression, supported by the statistical facts and some generalizations offered by informants, is that each household has a few preferential partners to whom they give or from whom they receive taro at least twice a week, but often far more frequently. In this sense every household in my sample has at least two preferential partnerships. Nine out of twenty-two had a third, two had a fourth, while the leader of the Seho clan had five.

Topographically it is a general rule that neighboring households form preferential partnerships. As the two clans live in rows on opposite sides of the village, linkages across the village square (*araha*) were thus comparatively sparser than linkages on each side, though some interclan linkages were effected through the households living along the short ends of the quadrangle, these being only weakly linked to either clan but, in a social sense, intermediate between the two.

Two types of hierarchical ordering should be distinguished in this model. The first is the ordering within each clan, where some people are intimate with the sociometric star whereas others are connected with him through being intimate with an intimate. The second type of ordering is close to what graph theorists call a Hamilton circuit (Harari and Ross, 1954; Flament, 1968) and would be consistent with an almost total absence of stratification. For the purpose of a particular transaction with someone outside or inside the village, one often needs the cooperation of a person with whom one is not intimate. This fact is expressed in the model by the size of the total circle and

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the need for several intermediary links to pass from one point to some other points. 824 571 431

The Orokaiva are wary of relations with persons with whom they are not intimate. They do not like to make even simple requests of such persons but prefer to make the request through intermediaries who are intimate with both sides. In that case it is possible, if the request cannot be met, for both sides to pretend that it was never made. No hard words are spoken, nobody is overtly humiliated. There is a customary blank, expressionless style which is used by intermediaries for the transmitting of requests—symbolic gestures of neutrality. The mediator avoids the risk of endangering his own alliance while still making what effort he can to satisfy the party seeking the benefit. If he is successful, the beneficiary is to some extent indebted to him.

This tendency to work through intimates sets up hierarchies in which almost anyone may at some time or other be the star figure. The total network available to an individual through such hierarchies is rather large, as the twenty-two households in my sample, for instance, have easy access to a total of seventy-five villages. Under the ecological conditions of the Orokaiva, no principle of kinship solidarity alone would provide a network of that size.

The basic ritual statement by which the presence of such intimate links is demonstrated is the feminine taro gift. Cooked taro, therefore, mediates not only the exchange of intimate attachment, but also the exchange of access to *alter*'s private network of alliances. The hierarchy of the taro network is based on the intimacy existing between any two consecutive links in the chain. The structure is hierarchical in that at the one end there is a household requiring a benefit, at the other end there is a person able to give that benefit, while the intermediate links are all necessary for the access to that person.

These hierarchies are more complex structures than those arising in the coconut-areca network. The system not only has the "circuit pattern" described above but also is capable of generating at all times new hierarchies linking persons who were not previously linked at all. Whereas the coconut-areca network

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corresponded to restricted exchange, the taro network corresponds to a complex system of generalized exchange. We find both these types of pattern in the Orokaiva marriage system; we find them again in the exchange of objects other than women.

To a large extent, these hierarchies are formed by free choice. Both sides are able to regulate the degree of intimacy by speeding up or slowing down the rate of taro gifts. While thus the taro network offers a good deal of opportunity for subtle *political* manipulation, one crucial criterion is missing from the taro network that is required in a political *system:* conflict is never expressed in terms of taro, except in one case, to which I shall refer below. The fact of not receiving a gift of cooked taro is never, by itself, a *casus belli,* but only a sign of coolness. It may signify no more than a development in a relationship from intimacy to mere amity. It is unlikely to cause anger, unless there are other sources of conflict at the same time.

Male taro gifts, occurring in the context of a feast, should according to the rules not be competitive in quantity. A visiting village expects to receive in return no more and no less than what it has given. If the other side gives more than it has received, this is regarded as an act of hostility. One cannot compare such an act to the potlatch behavior of the Indians or Polynesians, because it is a violation of the Orokaiva rules—a provocation that frequently ends in actual war. On the level of ideology, it is still valid to say that taro gifts can be used, as ritual statements, only to express pseudo-commensality, intimacy, and affection. A quite different rule says that any excessive return gift (whether of taro or something else) serves to express hostility. I shall return to this point elsewhere (Schwimmer, 1974).

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this essay will have been achieved if I have been able to show how objects, in such societies as the Orokaiva one, are "total phenomena," or, perhaps more accurately, multivalent phenomena. Certainly one understands little of the Orokaiva way of life if one does not perceive that a taro, for

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instance, is not just a food, or an economic value, but also a kinsman, also a form of power, also a sacrament.

In a more theoretical vein, we may regard this essay as a corroboration of two remarkable essays by Marshall Sahlins (1968, 1970) in which he elucidated the philosophy of Marcel Mauss and the Maori concept of *hau*. With some modifications, required to fit Orokaiva rather than Maori thought, we can say that a gift object such as a taro has a certain potency which enables it to perform an otherwise impossible act, such as convert an enemy into a friend. During the first stage of the transaction, when the taro, identified with the *vegetable* form of Totoima, is offered up to the marauder (= enemy, guest), the host, likewise identified with the taro, parts with it irrevocably. It is then snatched by the guest, who eats it and thus enters into communion with the host, now identified with Totoima. The force that compels the making of a return gift becomes effective by the act of communion. As Sahlins rightly argued, the transaction becomes meaningful only if it is considered within the context of the state of war which, in the absence of this sacrament, would prevail between the partners.

A question of some difficulty is the relation between the Totoima myth and the taro, coconut and areca rituals. I have proceeded in this essay without distinguishing what is conventionally known as mythology from what is conventionally known as ritual. Thus a key element in the *mythological* analysis was the fact that there are ritual ways of giving away raw and cooked taro. In this respect I followed a distinction which was recently (1971:598) proposed by Lévi-Strauss, namely, between "explicit" and "implicit" mythology. He argues that many mythical representations exist only in the state of notes, sketches, or fragments scattered in glosses and exegeses which appear in the context of ritual. He describes such representations, in other words, the cognitive aspect of ritual, as "implicit mythology."

Lévi-Strauss would thus restrict rather narrowly the scope of the ritual level to what would appear to be systems of paralinguistic signs in a sacred (or at least the opposite of everyday) context. By imposing this restriction, Lévi-Strauss pointed at a weakness in much writing about ritual (including the present

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NOTES

1. The classic works on the Orokaiva are Williams (1928, 1930). Useful studies in Orokaiva swidden agriculture are Crocombe and Hogbin (1963), Rimoldi (1966), Krinks and Waddell (1968). For my own studies on Orokaiva culture, see Schwimmer (1967, 1969, 1972, 1974, and n.d.).

2. Most of the present study was done in Paris in 1970 and distributed in mimeographed form by the Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale under the title "The Ideology of Exchange." I should like to express my gratitude to Professor Lévi-Strauss, Drs. Godelier and Pouillon, and the other members of the staff for their hospitality and encouragement. My wife, Mrs. Ziska Schwimmer, worked with me in the field on the collection of data and later with their analysis.

3. "A principle of gradation by which elements are related to the whole of which they form part."

4. Professor Lévi-Strauss suggested to me a most interesting relationship between this myth and the Polynesian Maui cycle. Maui was killed by a "Woman of Darkness," Maori: Hinenuiotepo.

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between the other two. Their existence is known, but some will not see their cognitive genesis. They tend to arise as they are logically implied by the two dominant ones; anyone who does not like 1 and 2 cannot help but think of 3 or 4 or both.

Identification in the Creation of Use Values

When Councillor Colin said that '*pure ari*' did not begin until Jesus Christ (i.e. people did not 'work' before that time) he ignored that *pure ari* in its primary meaning stands for 'to garden' and *pure* is a garden. From an empirical viewpoint we know exactly what goes on in a Sivepe garden, as Waddell has carefully measured it. The daily visit to the garden described by informants as *pure ali* takes a mean of 265 minutes of which 'main task' and 'ancillary tasks' take up in all 44.2% (Waddell and Krinks 1968: 113). The rest is devoted to travel, rest, meals, cooking, washing, other tasks. People always go to the *pure*; they do what they need to do. The amount of 'work' they have does not determine how long they stay. Sometimes they 'work' very hard, sometimes hardly at all.

The gardening tasks are done at a moderate pace which is pleasurable. Rushing and heavy burdens are avoided when possible, but when they are necessary they are classified as 'toil' (*pure gatha*) and people rest later to make up for it. The only time measures used are: early morning, midday, afternoon (meaning: time to go home) and evening-night (meaning: after supper). Though gardens have a principal crop, mostly taro, the subsidiary crops, ornamental trees, garden house etc. are charmingly landscaped so that the garden is in a sense an artistic creation (Malinowski 1935; F. Panoff 1969). Whether rows are regular and what is the general standard of husbandry are very much individual matters. It is said that by looking at a person's garden one can read his or her character. Among the Orokaiva the girls are said always to look at a boy's garden before marrying him. De Coppet (1976) reports the same for the Are'are of Malaita, except that it is the girls who are more under scrutiny. The criteria would partly be the style of the garden, showing a pattern of mind, but also and largely the size of the garden, the size and the health of the plants, the quality of the varieties.

One could keep on with such description for a long time without coming closer to defining garden work as a concept. Myths and rites prescribe details of the gardening cycle for each of the principal crops while at the same time establishing identification between grower and crop: taro is a mother; a mother Taro is invoked; married women think of their taro as their children. The

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taro ancestress is usually described as discovering the taro in a lake or other 'round water'. The demigod Totima comes closest to providing a general model of the primeval world of the swidden agriculturist and pig-raiser. Like Prometheus he is a sacrificial figure.[16]

Totoima was at the origin of the feasting institution (though there are other myths of the origin of feasting). It is here that questions of moral values mostly arise as feasting (*ergo* peace making) is the moral act *par excellence*. A direct connection is laid between the virtue of settling conflict and of feasting on the one hand and the fertility and yield of the garden on the other, as enemies are thought to ensorcell the gardens. Another important factor was the 'care' (*simbari*) (a general term covering magical as well as technical aspects) taken of the garden. The eldest male of the extended family, as father of the land, had a special duty as regards *simbari*. Garden magic was, however, made by all married males; they also made gifts to ancestors, who were thought to live in gardens and be reborn from there.

The model of the virtuous man was he who shared out his produce and made feasts (*hande embo*). Such a man would grow a surplus of food in a feasting garden. His power (*ivo*) would be manifest in the abundance of his pigs and taro. The model of the 'active man' would be the organizer of feasts in which the whole village participated (*kiti jigari embo*). Subordinate to him, but still high in reputation, would be experts at sorcery, healing, feather decoration and various forms of hunting, as well as those excelling in debate, rhetoric and diplomacy (*keari embo*).[17]

Identification occurred not only with crops, gods and ancestors, but also with trees harbouring local spirits, plant emblems harbouring lineage ancestors, animal guardians and plant doubles which were kept in the garden (usually surrounded by medicinal herbs) and contained the owner's life spirit, or perhaps name-spirit for the man bore the plant's name. A more complex aspect of identification with pigs and feast gardens is that such produce is destined to be given away, i.e. the owner expects to lose control over it; yet the donor remains identified with it and it calls for a return.[18] The same is true for the range of manufactures (clothes, pots, ornaments) that change hands at feasts.

The pattern described here is characteristic of what Sahlins (1974) called the domestic mode of production. Such a system produces, in his opinion, nothing but use values, even if they are 'exchanged' at feasts, for such 'exchange' is symbolically equivalent to a temporary extension of commensality. Slightly more complex

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is the contemporary case where money replaces traditional valuables. Is this money a 'use value'? Anthropologists have often analyzed it as such and not without some justification; the Orokaiva for instance present brideprice banknotes tied one by one to a tall sapling carried aloft by the donor and thus transported to the wifegiver. After presentation it is often stored in wait for other similar occasions. The fact is, however, that eventually this treasure is converted into exchange values. Furthermore, it owes its status as a valuable to its potential exchange value. It is therefore more easily accounted for in the preset four-system method of analysis as will appear later.

The same remark may be made in respect of labour assistance between households which is normally given without payments except for a meal at the end of the day. If, however, the service is given in connection with work for which the person assisted will eventually get paid, then the service falls within a different category and must be paid for. The same rule applies to the granting of land useholds for which no rent is ever demanded if the land produces (only) use values, but the situation changes when it produces exchange values. Use value is therefore a concept determining Orokaiva behaviour.

Finally, it is as true of the Orokaiva as of the ancient Greeks that conflict and war (*isoro*) did not have a necessarily negative connotation connotation. They might be bad or good according to circumstances. War, sorcery and other forms of negative reciprocity are part of this mode of production; they cannot be equated to 'alienation'. There is increasing evidence that Levi-Strauss (1943) was correct in viewing war in these societies as a modality of interdependence.

To sum up, the Orokaiva had a basic classification of *pure* as between subsistence and feasting. An inspection of the crop by the feast-giver was needed to let crops pass from the subsistence to the feasting category. (It was not done if the harvest was insufficient.) The term *pure ari*, whatever its customary translation into English, was never used to denote any kind of effectiveness in ensuring a food supply. In case of garden failure, people did not ascribe it to neglectful *pure ari* but rather to neglectful *simbari*. It is the demigods of the various crops and the ancestors who do the actual producing in the garden, and all that is expected of man is to clear, to plant and to protect against magical and technical dangers. Watchfulness is the key; toil is a consequence. A flawless garden testifies to watchfulness in the first instance; to physical prowess also, but only in the second instance. In this respect i.e. the technical as well as the magical watchfulness, *pure ari* is intermediate between the Greek concepts of ΕΡΓΟΝ and ΤΕΧΝΗ.

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the latter. Also, migrants normally leave behind a family member with the task of looking after the land (*simbari*) in a technical, magical and juridical sense. Often he also leaves behind a wife for whom he is saving brideprice but who meanwhile must be looked after by his relatives. Money sent home therefore covers not only feasting contributions but also the function of *simbari*. This is not because village people would not perform such services free of charge but because, when a man earns money, those who help him earn that money are entitled to their share.

If we look only at the relations of production migrants have in their jobs, they seem totally 'alienated' (cf. Parkin, this volume). Not only have they no control whatever over the product of their labour but this product lies entirely outside their conceptual universe. Yet these migrants avoid proletarianization in the full sense because they continue to have a stake in the village environment, which has its own economic, political and ideological base.

Our remarks above apply similarly to the village cash-crop sector. With the exception of coconuts, the use value Orokaiva see in European cash-crops is either very limited or non-existent. Coffee and cocoa are classified as non-foods, rubber latex as an unusable substance. Even the coconut, though an important food when fresh, represents no use value to Orokaiva when dried into copra.

This lack of perceived utility has not stopped cultivation of these crops on village land nor their processing by village-purchased machinery. Everyone irrespective of age is growing coffee. Those who are pressed for time tend to give priority to coffee and to partially replace their plantings of taro with 'German taro' – less valued but less laborious.[31]

Growing coffee is not considered pleasurable like growing taro. When suggesting to an informant that coffee trees have a sweet smell, I was firmly told: "*We* think the smell is dreadful". Such feelings go to show that the division between the spheres of use value and exchange value is not purely analytical but corresponds to a conceptual boundary between two models of life and work, and that Orokaiva try to keep this boundary clear. Coffee is grown because it takes far less time than it would to grow subsistence crops for the market, but the grower feels alienated from it while he feels identified with the subsistence crops. A small quantity of subsistence crops – surplus to requirements – is in fact sold in local markets for consumption by local people, but growers take the same care with them and regard them in the same way as the food they eat.

It is paradoxical that the work represented as introduced by Jesus

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121 tasks but also travel, rest, meals and miscellaneous "other tasks" – the most mentionable of which are cooking and washing. The phrase "dépense d'énergie" must thus be taken very broadly.

5. The present author's knowledge of Greek antiquity is at undergraduate level. From an anthropological viewpoint, an interesting general discussion of Hesiod will be found in Jaeger (1946). But see also Vernant (1965: 19–47) and Detienne and Vernant (1974: 59–124).
6. The translation of ΔΙΚΗ as 'justice' obscures an interesting difference made in Greek between two kinds of justice. *Themis* (ΘΕΜΙΣ) justice as dispensed by the early kinds and nobles whereas ΔΙΚΗ appears to be a system of dispute settlement by compensation payments to the injured party. The fundamental meaning of ΔΙΚΗ is 'due share' (Jaeger 1946: 103). ΥΒΡΙΣ would then be to refuse compensation and seek justice by force.
7. Vernant's explanation (p. 222) of this classification is as follows: "Dans la perspective de la valeur d'usage, le produit n'est pas vu en fonction du travail humain qui l'a créé, comme travail cristallisé; c'est au contraire le travail qui est vu en fonction du produit, comme propre à satisfaire tel besoin de l'usager . . . Marx écrit, de façon frappante, qu'en qualité de valeur d'échange, la marchandise n'est plus envisagée au point de vue du service qu'elle rend mais du service qui lui a été rendu par cela qu'elle a été produite." (*Critique de l'Economie politique*, p. 32.)

121 8. It has been objected that a work of art differs from a taro in that the former is a statement about patterns in the universe while the latter is 461 not. My own view of taros, however, is that in the sense of Hjelmslev, 824 they ought to be regarded as sign as well as substance; as signs, which they are whenever handled ritually, they do contain statements about the universe. On the semiotic issues involved see Hjelmslev (1953), Schwimmer (1977a, 1977b).

114 9. For relevant ethnographic data on Orokaiva, see Williams (1928, 1930); Waddell and Krinks (1968); Schwimmer (1967, 1969, 1973, 1974a, 1979a). For specifically semiotic investigations on Orokaiva, see Schwimmer (1974b, 1977a, 1979a, 1979b.)

121 10. Searle-Chatterjee demonstrates that group identity among the polluted caste groups remains firm and positive. It appears to be threatened only by the attempted suppression of the notion of caste by the central government. If this should ever succeed, caste identity would be threatened, because public belief in its toughness, hotbloodedness, honour etc. would be lost.

11. While I have learnt a good deal from Parry's fascinating analysis of the Mahabrahmans, I wish to dissociate myself from Parry's comments on Louis Dumont, as it would not be very difficult to reconcile Parry's findings with Dumont's theory.
12. I wish to acknowledge a debt to Mr. Edwin Ardener who suggested this argument to me during conversation at the York conference. He is not responsible, of course, for what I did with it. A rather similar point is made by Dumont (1977: 118, 182).